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Time and the Long Take in *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *Ugetsu*, and *Stalker*

by

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Film and Television Studies**

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Time and the Long Take in *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *Ugetsu*, and *Stalker*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

1. Introduction

-Statement of the Thesis Aims	2
-A Working Definition of the Long Take	3
-When is Duration Enough?	4
-Long Take, Time, Narrative, and Theme.....	16
-Long Take Practice and Scene Construction.....	18
-The Long Take: Cultural and Industrial Context.....	19
-Methodology.....	20
- ' <i>Philosophical</i> ' Formal-Textual Analysis.....	21
- <i>Aspects of Time</i>	23
- <i>External & Internal Time</i>	24
-Definitions.....	27
-Summary of Thesis Aims.....	28

2. Literature Review

-Introduction.....	31
-Subject Area 1: Filmic Time at the Structural-Narrative Level.....	32
-Subject Area 2: Long Take Theory and Practice.....	33
-Subject Area 3: Philosophy and Film Time.....	36
-Conclusion	37

3. Further Notes on '*Philosophical*' Formal-Textual Analysis

-Philosophical Preamble.....	40
-External Time.....	43
-Internal Time.....	45
- <i>Psychological Factors and Narrative</i>	45
- <i>Movement</i>	52
-Temporal Tonality: The ' <i>Quality</i> ' of Time in the Long Take.....	58
-Formal-Textual Analysis in Practice: The Trolley Sequence.....	67
-Conclusion.....	71

4. The Long Take & Structural Aspects of Narrative Time

-Introduction.....	75
-Automorphic Representations of Time.....	78
- <i>Classical versus Emblematic Automorphic Time</i>	80
-Homomorphic Representations of Time.....	83
- <i>Mise-en-Trickery</i>	86
-The Symbiotic Long Take.....	93
-The Force of Narrative Agency.....	100
- ' <i>Soft</i> ' Formal-Textual Determinism.....	102
-Conclusion.....	109

5. The Long Take, Narrative Efficiency and Expressivity	
-Introduction.....	113
-Long Take Experiments in Hollywood: <i>Rope</i> and <i>Under Capricorn</i> ...	115
-The Case of Max Ophuls and George Cukor.....	118
-The Long Take and the “Pleasures” of Narrative Detour.....	122
-Editing as a Narrative Agent and Stylistic Choice.....	132
-Long Take Economics.....	137
-Conclusion.....	142
 6. Long Take Practice Case Studies: Introduction to the Corpus	
-Welles, Mizoguchi, and Tarkovsky.....	145
-A Note on Cultural Specificity	151
-Conclusion.....	155
 7. Dialectical Long Take Practice: Orson Welles’ <i>The Magnificent Ambersons</i>	
-Introduction	158
-The Long Take, Time, and Theme.....	158
-George vs. Eugene: <i>Linear Time and Progress</i>	164
- <i>The Kitchen Scene: The Long Take and the Metaphysics of</i> <i>Confinement</i>	170
- <i>Spatial Configuration & The Long Take: The Staircase</i>	174
- <i>Social Time</i>	176
- <i>Time as Fading, Death, and Loss</i>	177
-Deleuzian ‘Sheets of the Past’.....	184
-The Long Take and Scene Construction.....	188
-Conclusion.....	194
 8. Synthetic Long Take Practice: Kenji Mizoguchi’s <i>Ugetsu</i>	
-Introduction: Movement & Circularity.....	197
-Falls and Rises (The Abject and the Elevated).....	199
-Movement/Journey Into Supernatural Time.....	207
- <i>Supernatural Time Meets Natural/Real Time</i>	212
-The Homecoming Scene and Automorphic/Homomorphic Time.....	218
-Momentous Time.....	221
-Circularity: To End or to Begin?.....	226
-The Long Take and Scene Construction.....	234
-Conclusion.....	238

9. **Radical Long Take Practice: Andrei Tarkovsky’s *Stalker***
 -Introduction.....242
 -Establishing ‘Drab Time’244
 -Durational Complexity248
 -*Durational Complexity Through Minimalism*.....249
 -*Internalised/Externalised Subjectivity*255
 -Creation Time.....261
 -*Creation Time Beyond the ‘Zone’*271
 -The Long Take and Scene Construction.....275
 -Conclusion.....283

10. **Conclusion**
 -Summing Up289
 -Radical Long Take Practice Today294
 -Long Take Practice: Statistical Guidelines for Further Research299
 -The Sense of an Ending302

Bibliography of Works Cited.....304

Appendices

1. Appendix 1: Scene by Scene Breakdowns of Case Study Films313
2. Appendix 2: Comparative Statistical Breakdown of Case Study Films330
 and Other Sampled Films
3. Appendix 3: A Sampling of Long Take Practice Films360

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Abstract

My thesis is an examination of the formal and textual aspects of the long take, principally as used in *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942, Orson Welles), *Ugetsu* (1954, Kenji Mizoguchi), and *Stalker* (1979, Andrei Tarkovsky). The thesis begins by defining the long take as a shot of 25 seconds or longer that usually contains one of the following qualities: a sense of completeness or wholeness, 'durational complexity,' and a 'soft' formal/thematic determinism. This working definition is used as part of a 'philosophical' formal-textual methodological approach to the long take informed by a 'common sense' philosophical understanding of time. An important element of this formal-textual methodology is 'contextual statistical analysis' (CSA) and close, accurate shot description. This 'common sense' philosophical understanding sees time as being expressible by properties that are both outside the self (external time) and by properties that are within the self (internal time). External time becomes the 'measurable' aspects of the long take (duration), which condition and are conditioned by the 'less quantifiable' aspects of a long take's internal time (pertinent formal and textual properties within the shot). Internal and external time combine to express the 'emotional quality' of time in a long take, which I call temporal tonality. By employing this formal-textual methodology to my three case study films, I demonstrate how a dominant use of the long take is an important (though not exclusive) formal component of each film's particular thematic and/or philosophical treatment of time. The long take is also analysed in two other case studies with more general designs: a taxonomy of the long take time and narrative time (Chapter 4), and an analysis of the long take as an expressive narrative agent in popular cinema (Chapter 5). Lastly, the statistical differences concerning long take usage gives rise to an articulation of three long take practices: Dialectical, Synthetic, and Radical. This original observation will lay down a general groundwork for further exploration of long take practice, style, theory, and analysis.

Chapter 1. Introduction

- Statement of Thesis Aims
- A Working Definition of the Long Take
- When is Duration Enough?
- Long Take, Time, and Narrative
- Long Take Practice and Scene Construction
- The Long Take: Cultural and Industrial Context
- Methodology
 - 'Philosophical' Formal-Textual Analysis*
 - Aspects of Time*
 - External & Internal Time*
- Definitions
- Summary of Thesis Aims

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Thesis Aims

My thesis is an examination of the formal and textual aspects of the long take, principally as used in *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942, Orson Welles), *Ugetsu* (1954, Kenji Mizoguchi), and *Stalker* (1979, Andrei Tarkovsky). More specifically, the way time is informed formally, textually, and philosophically within the long take of these films (and, *potentially*, in other films). Secondly, by employing a much broader sampling than my three case study films, I will outline an original taxonomy of existing relations between the long take and narrative time, and analyse the range of long take expressivity in popular narrative cinema. Lastly, I will use statistical analysis to help define three types of long take practices, each represented by one of the case study films, which will lay down a general groundwork for further exploration of long take practice, style, theory, and analysis. Combined, my aim is to uncover the varied relationships between the long take and time that remain unrecognized or undeveloped in film studies, with the goal of arriving at a more refined and theoretically rigorous understanding of the long take. In the process, demonstrating that the saliency of time to the long take can lead to fresh insight and unique perspectives on three films with an already rich critical legacy.

Why have I decided to concentrate on time within the long take? To begin, most attempts at defining the long take refer to temporal length (duration): “a shot of very long duration”;¹ “a shot that continues for an unusually lengthy time before the

¹Stephen Prince, *Movies and Meaning* (Needham Heights, Ma: Allyn & Bacon, 1997), 148.

transition to the next shot”;² or “a film shot that is appreciably longer than the longest shots which are usually found in the films of the period in question.”³ This primal connection between time and the long take led to an hypothesis which provided the central thrust for this thesis: that formal analysis and textual meaning is well served by a concentration on time because the expression of time in a long take can sometimes fall between such clearly defined functions as form, narrative exposition and thematic meaning. For example, time has come to represent (or symbolize) many things across the twentieth century. In the arts, particularly literature, poetry, painting and cinema, this includes such themes, ideas, or subjects as memory, aging, progress, history, the past, and personal identity. As my thesis will demonstrate, the formal qualities used to reflect time in a long take (movement, rhythm, pacing, direction, etc.) can also signal or help express some of these textual or philosophical meanings.

A Working Definition of the Long Take

For a clearer understanding of my thesis aims I must take a circuitous route and begin with what would appear to be an obvious and necessary starting point: What is a long take? As the above quotes attest, a long take must be a shot of considerable length, meaning a duration considerably longer than the average shot length of most narrative films. But this only begs other questions: What is the average shot length? Average in what context (national, historical, generic)? Average across many films or within a singular film? These and other contextual questions (cultural, technological, etc.) reveal the impossibility of assigning a singular definition to the

²David Bordwell, *Film Art: An Introduction* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 5th ed.1997), 479.

³Barry Salt, *Film Style & Technology: History & Analysis*, 2nd expanded ed. (Oxford: Starwood, 1992), 325.

long take. And yet viewers, critics and theorists still talk and write with confidence and certainty about the long take across national and historical lines.

Hence, there seems to be an implicit understanding of what a long take is among the film community, yet none of the definitions I have come across are fully satisfying. Rather than attempting the impossible, I will offer a working definition that allows me to concentrate on what I find to be the more interesting aspects of the long take. Before defining the long take, I should state what may be an obvious point, that by long take I mean the effect a shot has once it appears in the final cut of a film, as opposed to how a shot may have been filmed. For example, a master shot style of shooting may require that a certain character speaking their lines be shot in continuity and later cut into a shot reverse shot sequence. Though it may have been filmed in “long take,” it appears in the final cut as a series of shorter shots.

When Is Duration Enough?

In any case, a definition must deal with the sticky question of duration (more on the relevance of duration in the Chapter 3 section, “External Time”). Based on years of research and film viewing, the lowest numerical duration at which a shot *has been* referred to as a long take is in the 25-40 second range⁴. This figure is not arbitrary, but based on a sampling of statistical breakdowns and averages across the work of film writers who have employed statistical analysis to a greater extent than any other writers: Colin Crisp, Barry Salt, and David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson,

⁴ Subsequently, I will employ the following time notation: (') for minutes and (") for seconds. I will designate average shot lengths (ASL's) over one minute in both minutes and seconds. For example, an ASL of 77 seconds will be written as 1'17".

and Janet Staiger.⁵ Below is a chart showing their respective average shot lengths

(ASL's) for the noted national cinemas across selected time spans:

Colin Crisp: (France)

1930-1933: 15"

1934-1939: 12.5"

1939-1945: 9.5"-12.5"

1946-1950: 9"

Barry Salt: (US)

1912-1917: 9.6"

1918-1923: 6.5"

1928-1933: 10.8"

1934-1939: 9.0"

1940-1945: 9.5"

1946-1950: 10.5"

1952-1957: 11"

1958-1963: 9.3"

1964-1969: 7.7"

1970-1975: 7.0"

1976-1981: 8.4"

1982-1987: 8.4"

(All of Europe)

1912-1917: 15"

1918-1923: 8.6"

1934-1939: 12"

1964-1969: 10.7"

(France)

1934-1939: 13"

(British)

1933-1939: 8"

1964-1969: 7.7"

Bordwell, Staiger, Thompson (US)

1915-16: 12"

1917-18: 5-7"

1917-1928: 5-6"

1929-1934: 11"

1935-1946: 9"

1947-1960: 11-12"

1929-1960: 10-12"

⁵Colin Crisp, "Ch. 7. Work Practices and Stylistic Change," in *The Classic French Cinema 1930-1960* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington & Indianapolis, 1993), 358-414; Barry Salt, *Film Style & Technology: History & Analysis*, 2nd expanded ed. (Oxford: Starwood, 1992); David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985).

The above figures show that a length between 25"-40" is considerably longer than these average lengths.⁶ Though similar historical averages do not exist for other national cinemas, it is fair to say, given the relative importance, power, and influence of the French and US film industries, that the narrative averages of *most* other national cinemas would be similar, where applicable, to the above averages.

Further evidence to support this length range can be offered. Crisp explains the speeding up of the cutting rate in mainstream French cinema between the years 1930 to 1950 as follows:

...there was a tendency for mainstream films to use more and more shots of 0-5 seconds duration between 1930 and 1950; and their number of shots over 45 seconds in length tended to fall steadily over the same period....As an index of the renunciation of long takes, the number of shots over 45 seconds in films directed by Carné fell from 33 in *Hotel du Nord* (1938) to 22 in *Le jour se lève* (1939), 11 in *Les visiteurs de la nuit* (1942).⁷

Hence Crisp is clearly using 45" as a rough defining length for the long take. In discussing the role of the editor in the increasing of the cutting rate Crisp notes, "By 1954 P. Mouchon, in his guide to editing, can posit as 'an essential principle' that 'except in cases of absolute necessity' no shot should ever last longer than 20 seconds."⁸ Joseph McBride writes, "Welles holds each shot a little longer than is

⁶Perhaps there is more than meets the eye to these average figures across many national cinemas. If we were to take a rough estimate of all the above ASL's the average would be around 8-12 seconds. In his classic study on psychology William James writes, "The *longest bit of duration* which we can apprehend at once so as to discriminate it from longer and shorter bits of time would seem (from experiments made for another purpose in Wundt's laboratory) to be about 12 seconds." James refers to this as the 'specious present' (a term coined by E.R. Clay in 1882). Later chronopsychologists have corroborated this figure, broadening the estimate to 2-12 seconds (Joseph E. McGrath & Janice R. Kelly, *Time & Human Interaction: Toward a Social Psychology of Time*. (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1986), 69.). This aligns uncannily to the average shot lengths noted above. So perhaps filmmakers across time and nation have intuited through trial and error, theory and practice, what is physiologically and psychologically 'right'.

⁷Crisp, 404.

⁸Ibid., 409.

normal; thirty seconds or a minute (or longer) is such an uncommon length for a shot that we are unconsciously drawn into thinking that it will last longer.”⁹

In his discussion of the distribution of shot lengths Barry Salt writes:

For those films having Average Shot Lengths up to about 20 seconds or a little beyond, (which includes the vast bulk of ordinary commercial movies), the distribution of numbers of shots with different lengths conforms at least approximately, and very well for films with a short ASL, to a standard statistical distribution, the Lognormal distribution. For those much rarer films with a very high Average Shot Length of around 30 seconds or more, the nature of the distribution of shot lengths is not at present clear....¹⁰

Hence empirical evidence leads to a general, unstated consensus of approximately 25”-40” as the general length at which a shot can begin to be thought of as a long take. I will call this the low end of the long take spectrum. What makes this low end a potentially contentious gray area is that not all shots in its range are necessarily referred to as such by writers. Most critics will have their own unstated reason for why they may refer to a shot of such length as a long take.¹¹ Hence the more relevant question from a critical and theoretical standpoint becomes, what are the formal, textual and stylistic qualities that make a critic refer to a shot in the

⁹ Joseph McBride, *Orson Welles* (New York: The Viking Press, The Cinema One series, 1972), 56.

¹⁰Salt, 225.

¹¹For example, this is Michael V. Montgomery describing a scene from Sirk’s *Written on the Wind*: “Marylee walks from the window to the fireplace, where she finds a fireplace match to light her cigarette. Next she picks up an album cover from a nearby chair and recrosses the room to a phonograph, flipping it on. She begins to dance. After several twists and spins, Marylee pauses behind an opaque glass screen and places the album cover on top. There, cigarette still in her mouth, she begins to strip. The whole scene takes *forty-five seconds* [my emphasis] and seems another stylistic indulgence on Sirk’s part, because the *long take* [my emphasis] captures Marylee’s gestures *in real time* and slows the narrative down....Critics have not been nearly as interested in the following shot, but it too is an unusually long take, this time of Mr. Hadley and Mitch in the study....This second scene takes about *twenty-five seconds* [my emphasis] and shares with Marylee’s dance a common *reference point* (the exit of the attendant) and the same musical background, indicating their temporal contiguity, and also serving to create a sense of expectation or *immediacy*.” *Carnivals and Commonplaces: Bakhtin’s Chronotope, Cultural Studies, and Film* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 76-77. I have come across many similar length references to the long take. However, I have never come across a writer referring to a shot of 10 or 15 seconds as a long take.

25"- 40" second range as a long take? What is it about these shots that have made writers label them as long takes (while thousands of other shots in this range go unnoticed)?

With this subjective proviso in place, I will now offer my reasons why shots in the 25" to 40" range can (and have been) considered as long takes. A shot in the 25" to 40" range (and subsequently all long takes) is *interesting* enough to be studied as a long take when:

- 1) the action contained within the shot renders *a sense of completeness or wholeness*
- 2) the shot contains "durational complexity" (briefly explained as the apparent discord between a shot's duration and how a spectator may estimate this duration, explained further below)
- 3) the presence of a "soft" formal/thematic determinism in the shot (explained below)

For point one, the sense of completeness or wholeness can be a physical movement across continuous space and time, such as entering a room, walking toward a chair and sitting down, or a fully rendered dialogue exchange. In other words, a dialogue exchange, physical action or movement (camera or otherwise), or physical space that feels complete.¹² I will demonstrate using two shots of the same length (34") from *The Magnificent Ambersons*. The first one, shot 90 from scene 5, is a static medium close-up (MCU) two-shot of Eugene (Joseph Cotton) and Lucy (Anne Baxter) in the back of the Morgan Invincible coach. The scene comes directly after

¹²Bazin describes how *découpage* in depth absorbs the concept of 'shots' in a *découpage* unit which might be called the sequence. Bazin refers to this as the 'le plan séquence.' The long take here recomposes a unity, in this case a dramatic and psychological whole, but this unity can be compressed to mean completeness or wholeness at a more local, restricted level (the long take shot). In fact, the synonymous use of the long take and the sequence shot is often inaccurate because not every long take is a sequence shot. In fact the term sequence shot is a misnomer, since a sequence is usually composed of several scenes, therefore theoretically one sequence can encompass several sequence shots. Which underscores the fact that there is no uniformity in how film writers, critics, theorists or filmmakers use scene and sequence. In my case I have decided to forego sequence and employ only the terms scene for my formal-textual analysis.

the Ball Scene and finds Lucy in an inquisitive state with regards George. Lucy and Eugene conclude their brief discussion about George, and the shot dissolves to the next shot/scene. The shot feels complete in that the dialogue concludes naturally and the physical space fades from view once its narrative purpose is complete.

The other shot, 165, is the second shot from scene 8 (Wilbur's funeral). The camera assumes a point of view looking out from Wilbur's (Don Dillaway) open coffin. The camera pans left along the mourners, following Eugene and Lucy as they walk past George (Tim Holt) and Fanny (Agnes Moorehead), to Isabel (Dolores Costello). Eugene takes Isabel in hand and continues to walk left, exiting the frame while Fanny follows slowly and watches longingly. The camera stops to frame Fanny, and then cuts to a close-up low angle shot of Fanny's pained expression. The cut to a closer shot of Fanny's facial expression deprives the previous shot of its wholeness, rendering it a build-up to the next shot. Hence it lacks the sense of completeness that makes the first example *feel* like a long take, despite the fact that they are both of identical running time (34").

The second factor, durational complexity, refers primarily to the psychological factor of time, that is when a temporal event is experienced as feeling considerably *longer* or *shorter* than its sheer clock-time. An example of the latter type of durational complexity is a shot whose dense action renders a psychological temporal distortion by making the shot appear shorter than it actually is. I will use shot 259 from scene 29 of *The Magnificent Ambersons* as an example. The narrative information in this scene is to inform the audience of the death of one of its central characters, Isabel. However, the news is rendered in a decidedly abstract manner. The shot begins on a high angle MCU of the elderly Major (Richard Bennett) in a troubled state of sleep. He wakes up (his eyes first open 10" into the shot) and walks blankly toward the camera, the

camera dolly back slightly. On the soundtrack we hear a strange, distant chime. Jack (Ray Collins), Isabel's brother, enters frame left in close-up profile and moves quickly across the frame past the Major. The Major turns toward Jack, and, as if still in a dream and powerless to speak, signals to Jack with an outstretched arm. As he completes his turn toward Jack, the Major bumps into a third character, Fanny, George's aunt. The camera completes its rightward pan to now frame Fanny in a big close-up embracing George, Isabel's son, who has his back to the camera. Fanny whispers, "George, she loved you, she loved you." The shot slowly fades to black.



On first viewing we remain uncertain as to what is exactly happening because so much happens in such a relatively short time and in a highly confined physical space. The camera makes only two small movements: a pull back and a reframe to the right. But the camera movement operates in perfect timing with the intricate character blocking to dramatize the small, tightly confined block of space. The following description of the scene by Joseph McBride is an example of the effect durational complexity can have on critical perception (and memory):

The two tiny camera movements achieve such a strong effect because of their careful timing with the characters' movements, with the shock of Fanny's entrance, and because of the surreal, dreamlike compression of the scene: once the Major wakes, *it is over in seconds* [my emphasis].¹³

¹³Joseph McBride, *Orson Welles*, First De Capo Press Edition, 1996, revised from 1972 edition, (New York: De Capo Press, Inc.), 80.

The impression one gets from McBride's description is that the shot lasts only a dozen or so seconds, when in fact it lasts 27" (17" from the point when the Major wakes up). McBride's description is an indication of how a shot that contains such intense action can be perceived as being "short." At this point it is enough to say that in a long take that exhibits durational complexity, a dramatically engaged viewer will lose their ability to accurately gauge the shot's duration because they are so absorbed or mesmerized by the action. The result is a form of temporal foreshortening.¹⁴

However, the point is not to see whether or not a viewer can remember the precise duration of a shot; after-all, there are many potential factors behind such a miscalculation (i.e. faulty memory, lengthy time-span since film was seen, etc.). The point is to attempt to understand the on-screen qualities that produced such an effect. A long take in which some such form of durational complexity occurs holds great critical interest for me. And not the varied spectatorial conditions that may affect the accuracy of temporal recall.

To continue, durational complexity can also occur in the opposite situation: a relatively low level of narrative action over a long period of time. The aesthetic effect of this latter type of durational complexity is more difficult to describe or understand but, to my mind, no less fascinating. For example, the long take with an extremely low kinetic level (i.e. little action, dialogue, movement) that produces a mesmeric effect in which the shot *feels* shorter, or where time *feels* suspended. Durational complexity, which can be found in a relatively "short" (25"-40") or "long" (over 2'00") long take, is something I find particularly fascinating about the relationship

¹⁴ In his overview of the psychology of time "Perception and Estimation of Time," Paul Fraisse labels these two different temporal realms as "perception of time" and "estimation of time." *Annual Review of Psychology* 35 (1984): 1-36.

between time and the long take. I will focus on such moments of durational complexity whenever they occur throughout my case studies, especially those shots where durational complexity interacts with time at the thematic level.

My third point, “soft” formal and thematic determinism, refers to situations where a certain dramatic, narrative or thematic point is only possible through the long take, or is deemed by the viewer/writer/critic to be more effective or more powerful because it is filmed in long take. Shots exhibiting this formal/thematic determinism give the impression, in hindsight, that they could not possibly have been shot any other way and achieved the same dramatic, emotional, and artistic effect. As an example I will use the famous final shot in Carol Reed’s *The Third Man* (1949). The shot takes place after the funeral of Harry Lime (Orson Welles), a Nietzschean human-monster whose wartime black marketing of tainted penicillin led to the deaths and mutations of hundreds of adults and children. Lime is brought to justice by the British Army and police force with the help of Holly Martins (Joseph Cotton), a pulp novelist who slowly comes to accept the hideous truth concerning his one-time best friend Harry Lime. The third principal character is Lime’s ex-lover Anna Schmidt (Alida Valli), a Czechoslovakian woman whose undying love for Lime knows no bounds. Anna has grown to admire Martins, who has fallen in love with her, but in the penultimate scene at the train station spurns Martins when she learns that he is helping the authorities catch Lime.

Before describing the shot it is crucial to note that this film has a very fast cutting rate, with an ASL of 5”, and of its 1253 shots only 9 are long takes (shots over 25”). This is an important point, one that relates to the broader issue of relative pacing

across a single film. Within the context of such a fast cut film, the inclusion of a rare long take at the end gives it an added import. Anna appears as a small speck in the extreme background of the shot, walking along a long, dirt road symmetrically framed by rows of bare trees flanking the road and falling away to form a vanishing point. Holly Martins is positioned in the lower left of the frame, in full shot, leaning against a wagon cart looking in the direction of Anna. The camera remains static for the full length of its 1'12". Autumn leaves fall gently to the floor. With each passing second, slowly, gradually, Anna gets closer to where Holly is patiently waiting. Will she stop to join him? Will she return his love? Will she forgive Holly? Will she at least acknowledge him? The flow of time in the shot is weighted by these formal and textual factors to make us feel Holly Martins' psychological time. As she nears Holly, his anticipation, shared by us, mounts. *His* temporal consciousness is heightened. Anna, who remains in focus throughout the shot, walks stoically past him without batting an eye, and straight past to the right of the camera off-frame. Holly, his head turned to follow her, takes out a cigarette, lights it, throws away the match, and the scene fades to black.

There is always stylistic choice, so Reed could surely have cut to a close-up of Holly Martins, or to a close-up of Anna Schmidt, without altering or impairing narrative coherence (Anna does not forgive Holly). Several alternative ways of structuring this scene could be imagined. But would they hold as much emotional or dramatic weight? First of all, what is the emotional and dramatic weight that the long take is supposedly making more effective? The most obvious one is the spurning of Holly Martins. I would add that at a deeper level, the scene's most dramatic emotion is shared guilt: by Holly Martins for informing on his friend, and by Anna Schmidt for continuing to love such a despicable man. In any case, let us say that an alternative

style would not have rendered these emotions as effectively because by giving time added resonance through the *rare* static long take, the suspense of the moment is unbearably heightened. This explains the notion of ‘soft’ formal/thematic determinism, and also why this particular shot has become much discussed, while an even longer take (1’15”) between Anna Schmidt and Captain Calloway in the police station has never, to my mind, been even mentioned in any scholarly discussion of the film.¹⁵ One can add that certain canonized ‘great’ moments in cinema, such as the above, become so embedded in our consciousness that we can not imagine them filmed any other way. Hence formal/thematic determinism often comes to us in a retroactive glaze of nostalgia, memory, and wish fulfillment.

Even though this shot would be considered a long take by its sheer length alone (1’12”), all three of my noted points apply to why this is an expressive, much-discussed long take. The shot contains a *sense of completeness*, with Anna Schmidt walking into full view and past the camera, “coming and going”. It expresses a curious *durational complexity* based on three factors: 1) the dramatic tension 2) the stillness (static camera, leaves falling gently to the ground, Anna Schmidt’s measured pace) and 3) the rare appearance of the long take at such a crucial moment [and the only static long take in the film]. And the just noted third factor, *formal/thematic determinism*.¹⁶

¹⁵There is another possible ‘interpretive-based’ explanation for this long take. In truth, I do not think the relationship between Anna and Holly is convincingly scripted or portrayed. Subsequently, by the end I care very little about how they feel toward each other, or the consequences of their unrequited love. Perhaps director Reed was aware of this, and included the dramatic imposition of the long take at this critical juncture to give the ending a purely formal weight not carried by the narrative, script, or performances alone. In any case, the passing of time in the final long take is not something abstract but is integral to the dynamics of the scene, which is not the case with the noted longer take during a scene at the police station.

¹⁶ Of course there are other factors behind critics referring to certain shots as long takes. For example, as evidence of technical bravura or cinematic spectacle, like those of Brian De Palma or Martin Scorsese; as a reflexive or intertextual game of one-upmanship, such as the allusions to the opening shot from *Touch of Evil* (in *Absolute Beginners* 1986, Julien Temple, *Days of Being Wild* 1991, Wong Kar-Wai, *The Player* 1992, Robert Altman); or as an auteurist signature.

To conclude with the above discussion, I should make the following clear: a long take is not by definition an “interesting” or “good” shot. For example, the 34” shot described earlier of Eugene and Lucy in the backseat of the coach qualifies as a long take because of its sense of completeness, but is not, I feel, a particularly interesting or complex use of the long take. Nor is it a more interesting shot than my counterexample, shot 165 (which in many respects is actually more interesting). While in comparison, it is evident from our above discussion that shot number 259, which is 6” shorter, is a vastly rich long take. As a more general counter example, concerning *the sense of completeness or wholeness*, there are countless examples of long takes where this happens and yet the shot in question remains boring, uninteresting or dramatically flat. Take for example, the many American early talkies that were filmed as “canned theatre”, or the extremely low budget/poverty row films where long dialogue exchanges are shot in long take to avoid costly camera and lighting set-ups. In the latter example, this inevitably “highlights” bad dialogue and stiff acting. These may be long takes, but not ones that are studied for their aesthetic beauty, formal brilliance, or stylistic ingenuity. (Though in both cases they would be valuable as study subjects within an economic-industry analysis.)

I reiterate, since these reasons may not concur with those of every critic, the above is not a finite definition of the long take; but rather a working definition that allows me to analyze and discuss what I find most interesting about the long take. While this definition accomodates what I find aesthetically, emotionally, and intellectually stimulating about the long take, it also stands as a summation of the qualities which have led other writers to label certain shots as long takes. As such it will add to a general understanding of the long take, and can provide a helpful guide for future long take analysis. How this defining criterion is put into practice in every

individual instance will depend on critical subjectivity. Hence the point of my close textual analysis is not to label which shots are long takes and which are not, but to articulate the varied ways in which time and the long take interact at the formal and thematic level; and to underscore my own particular critical interest in long takes that feature formal or textual wholeness/completeness, durational complexity, or formal/thematic determinism. Since my aim is to use this definition as a starting point for analysis (statistical, formal, and thematic), I will assume a ‘neutral’ perspective and judge all *potential* long takes (shots 25” or longer) as long takes.

Long Take, Time, and Narrative

One of the central concerns of my thesis –to articulate the formal and textual interconnectedness of the long take and time- leads to a secondary related area: the complex relation between the long take and narrative time. On a general structural-formal level this will involve a detailed taxonomy of how the long take’s duration (screen-time) relates to story time. Though the long take often relates to real time, for example 30” of projected time (screen-time) equaling 30” of narrative-time, the taxonomy I will put forth in Chapter 4 will reveal that this relation is more subtle and varied than usually assumed. The taxonomy will branch out to the various ways that narrative time can be represented and manipulated in a long take. This will comprise an important aspect of my study, since no such taxonomy exists.

Connected to narrative, time, and the long take is a critical issue with philosophical overtones that is best phrased in the following manner: what does it mean to say that a long take can foreground time and/or heighten a spectator’s perception of time? Ray Carney, speaking about one of the first grand masters of the long take, Carl Dreyer, says: “The first generalization that one can make about

Dreyer's style is that it heightens a viewer's consciousness of time.”¹⁷ This is often said in passing as an assumed critical statement on the long take. For example, Robert Philip Kolker in respect to the kitchen scene in *The Magnificent Ambersons* writes, “As the sequence builds, the camera staring impassively and at length, we get caught not only in its drama, but in its very presence as an image of considerable duration.”¹⁸ Or in respect to *Touch of Evil*, Richard Maltby and Ian Craven write, “Even viewers who do not consciously register that the sequence is presented in a single shot become oppressively aware of the passage of time as the shot continues....Long takes make the audience aware that they have no control over the passing of time.”¹⁹ [When *do* we have control over the passing of time?]

The point here is not to take issue with the above writers. In principle I feel, as do Carney and others, that in certain cases where such aesthetic choices are made, there is an attempt to directly engage a viewer's consciousness of time. But these examples do not offer enough descriptive support for their claims. They are indicative of how existing scholarship is too vague even on what formal and aesthetic qualities lead a shot to be thought of as a long take; let alone the thorny notion of “heighten[ing]” a viewer's consciousness of time, and what that may mean. Such a statement can lead to a complex critical undertaking, mainly because there are many reasons why a film would want to foreground time in this way (not to mention unintentional reasons, such as boredom, bad filmmaking, etc.). However, what interests me are those moments where a film will ‘heighten’ a viewer's consciousness of time to a particular artistic end (i.e. for thematic or narrative effect). Which is why, methodologically, I will address questions of this nature by employing precise,

¹⁷Ray Carney, *Speaking the Language of Desire: The Films of Carl Dreyer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 55.

¹⁸Robert Philip Kolker, *The Altering Eye* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 151.

¹⁹Richard Maltby and Ian Craven, *Hollywood Cinema* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1995), 245.

concrete terms, and by using close analysis to attend to what is happening formally and textually within a long take; and how this process may relate, when appropriate, to a thematic reading of the long take. Although my aim is not to untangle all the possible ramifications of this undertaking, I will discuss particular aspects of this question across my thesis. Mainly in Chapter 3 (“Temporal Tonality: The ‘Quality’ of Time in the Long Take”), Chapter 5, and when applicable in my case studies.

Long Take Practice and Scene Construction

My thesis also aims at making general points regarding the relationship between long take practice and scene construction. By long take practice I mean a general rather than specific use of the long take that considers the long take as an overall structural component. For instance, how frequently is the long take used? Is it used only in certain types of scenes or actions? Is it used consistently from scene to scene or in clusters? Is it used consistently for certain narrative moments? Does the use of the long take change during the course of the film? If so, is the change thematically or narratively motivated? I plan to articulate this with a detailed shot-by-shot, scene-by-scene breakdown that employs statistical analysis to help reveal structural elements and patterns that may relate to the larger thematics of time. This methodological approach will also demonstrate that the use of statistical analysis (shot/scene breakdown, average shot length [ASL], etc.) is best exploited for critical value when used as part of a broad contextual analysis. Otherwise, for example, an ASL on its own tells us very little about a particular shot or a film’s overall structural or emotional rhythm.

The greatest gain from looking at long take practice in the three films I have chosen will be to an understanding of the three respective films, which share an expressive use of the long take. In fact what I discover about how these three remarkable directors have used the long take will become an important descriptive component to my work. However, the films were also selected because of their difference in many respects (dealt with in Chapter 6). These differences will, I think, give a general slant to my findings with respect to how long take practice functions as an aspect of overall style and narrative structure. My analysis in this regard is not meant to be exhaustive –plainly an impossible task- but representative of three wide-ranging forms of long take practices, identified as follows. A filmmaker may choose to use the long take in a single film or across their work, selectively (Orson Welles), as a main structuring principle (Kenji Mizoguchi), or as an exclusive structuring principle (Andrei Tarkovsky). I will refer to these three long take practices as, respectively: Dialectical, Synthetic, and Radical. These will be elaborated in the single film case studies (Chapters 7, 8, 9) and in the Conclusion (Chapter 10).

The Long Take: Cultural and Industrial Context

Growing out of the previous context of narrative, time, and theme, industry context can have considerable bearing on long take practice. For example, you will find long takes used more commonly and more intensively in Asian or European art film than in American popular film. This point is not without its interesting consequences and avenues for historical and economic research. For example, research has shown that developments in early narrative cinema (1900-1920) such as the introduction of playing times, industrialised production, and the dominance of linear

cause and effect narratives was strongly shaped by the commodification of time in post-industrial revolution society (punctuality, scientific management, Protestant work ethic, time as money, etc.). In turn, these economic and industrial-organizational factors led to the supremacy of the master shot/classical editing style (shorter & multiple shot scenes) in Hollywood cinema.²⁰ However, this did not preclude the existence of certain directors who still preferred a long take style (Max Ophuls, Otto Preminger, George Cukor, Vincente Minnelli, William Wyler, and Orson Welles). To what *extent* and under what conditions the long take was adaptable to the popular Hollywood narrative is another matter (genre, directorial clout, productorial control, etc.).

History has shown that, though theoretically possible (*Rope* and *Under Capricorn* for example), an exclusive and intense use of the long take was not the preferred choice of the Hollywood production method. All the varied and complex reasons for this are beyond the scope of this thesis. However, I will broach aspects of this issue (production method, industrialisation, and narrative efficiency) in relation to how it impacts on questions of long take practice in Chapter 5: “The Long Take, Narrative Efficiency and Expressivity.” Posed as a problem: how were expressive long take practices used within popular narrative cinema? Some of these issues will also inform my Chapter 7 case study of *The Magnificent Ambersons*, because they bear an affinity to that film’s thematics of efficiency and technological progress.

Methodology

For my research tools I aim to use all possible means to gather print material relevant to my field of study. This will include conventional library facilities (books,

²⁰The most forceful presentation of this argument can be found in chapter 5, “Thebligs and Hieroglyphs” of Michael O’Malley’s *Keeping Watch: A History of American Time*. New York: Penguin Books, 1990, 200-255.

journals, card catalogues, microfiche, etc.), plus the latest computer technologies, such as CD-ROM databases (*Dissertations International Abstracts*, *Film International Archives*), online services, and the worldwide web. My literature will consist primarily of material from the field of film studies, but also secondary material from the field of philosophy. From the broad field of film studies, I will select material that represents the best writing on the topic of long take style, aesthetics, and film time. Where it comes to film time I will be as encompassing as possible. However, with respect to the question of long take form and theory, I will be guided by specific criteria. Since this is not an auteurist study, my goal will be to elucidate the long take as it relates to artistic time and not to directorial intent or authorship. My own approach to film form will be set forth below as I discuss the next methodological component, formal-textual analysis.

“Philosophical” Formal-Textual Analysis

The core of my methodology will be the formal-textual analysis that will bring to bear my research findings on the three case study films (long take practice, narrative time, thematic significance, etc.), and the broader-based case studies of Chapters 4 and 5. My approach to textual analysis is partially influenced by the theoretical approach applied by Ray Carney in his book on the important long take stylist, Carl Dreyer, *Speaking the Language of Desire: The Films of Carl Dreyer*. Carney notes that there have been two general critical approaches to Dreyer’s style: thematic and formalist (neo-formalist in Kristen Thompson’s definition, or, more precisely, parametric with regards to David Bordwell). In this either/or approach, the thematic critic reads everything about style as an expression of narrative theme, while

the formalist critic reads style as being poetic in itself and fore-grounded beyond the concern of narrative theme. Carney believes that such an either/or approach is unable to account for the way that Dreyer's style is "... in a much more intricate and complex relation to the subjects, actions, characters, settings, and events of the films"²¹ Or for the "enormously complex set of psychological, emotional, and intellectual adjustments [Dreyer's style asks] of a viewer's attention."²²

Like Carney, my 'philosophical' formal-textual analysis differs from rigid schools of neo-formalism that divorce form from issues of meaning or interpretation. Such an approach is inadequate for the purposes of my thesis specifically because a formal/textual/thematic complexity *can*, under the proper artistic guidance, exist between the long take and time. So an either/or approach (form or content-based) is ill equipped for the task because the use of time within a long take sometimes falls between clearly defined form/content polarities (narrative exposition, theme, meaning, or style). Implicit in this methodology is the importance of *accurate* shot description as an undeniable component of a formal-textual analysis with designs on interpretation and meaning. The difficulty in translating moving images (and sound) into words, along with its critical importance, is too often under appreciated and overlooked in film studies.

In terms of methodology I will employ statistical analysis, but always within a broad scope that relates the findings to questions of industry norms, long take practice, narrative structure, and theme. I will refer to this as contextual statistical analysis (CSA). Precisely how my use of statistical analysis differs from that of one of its innovators, Barry Salt, will be discussed in the Literature Review (Chapter 2). With a few exceptions, every film discussed at some length was viewed at least once

²¹Carney, 52.

²²Ibid., 54.

on film (16mm or 35mm). For the purpose of statistical analysis, my preferred format was DVD or laserdisc. When the film was not available in either of these formats I used the best available videotape.

Aspects of Time

My literature will consist primarily of material from the field of film studies, including 'film philosophy,' but also secondary material from the field of philosophy. My philosophical interest is in *lived time* rather than *mathematical time*, or as St. Augustine put it, the "time of the soul" and not the "time of the cosmos." In other words, time as it relates to human consciousness and art, rather than time as it relates to science, physics, or mathematics (fields which I am not qualified in).²³ The structuring principle behind my data collection and data processing is to see to what extent a selective reading in an external field (philosophy) can enrich both a formal and thematic understanding of the purely "cinematic" long take. For example, whether a deeper understanding of the psychological parameters of time (the subjective nature of time) can help us to better gauge a long take for factors affecting the perception of filmic time (time passing slowly, quickly, etc.).²⁴ After the data has been collected and synthesized, the external literature will be brought to bear on a) my

²³In fact, it is this very dichotomy between lived time and mathematical time that Paul Ricoeur believes brings together time and narrative. As Genevieve Lloyd writes of Ricoeur's monumental three-volume *Time and Narrative*: "Cosmological and phenomenological approaches to time cannot be reconciled. There is an 'intractable reality' to time which resists all attempts to reduce or internalize it to consciousness. Nor can we offer a coherent account of time without consciousness Time and narrative thus draw together.... Time becomes human in being organized after the manner of a narrative; and narrative in turn is meaningful to the extent that it portrays features of temporal experience This reciprocity between time and narrative is Ricoeur's central thesis." Genevieve Lloyd, *Being in Time: selves and narrators in philosophy and literature*, (London: Routledge, 1993), 11.

²⁴This aspect of my work is partially influenced by the cognitive approach to film, which looks at conscious rather than unconscious (or rational rather than irrational) mental and perceptual processes of the spectator. The book I am most indebted to is Torben Grodal's, *Moving Pictures: A New Theory of Film Genres, Feelings, and Cognition*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

critical-analytical approach to the long take, and b) the thematic meaning of a particular long take/film.

External & Internal Time

Arguably, the two most important philosophers with respect to film *and* time are Henri Bergson and Gilles Deleuze. Both, especially Bergson, have had a formidable influence on my intellectual history. Yet, I have always resisted “totalizing” explanations, theories, or definitions. In film studies terms, this aligns my project with what David Bordwell calls “middle-level” research, which is committed to the belief that “*you do not need a Big Theory of Everything to do enlightening work in a field of study.*” Or what Noël Carroll refers to as ‘piecemeal’ small-scale theorizing, where the methodological rationale is to reduce the area of research, or break down the question into a manageable subject.²⁵ In my case ‘film time’ is the broad subject/question, and the interaction of time and the long take the micro-question.

Because of this I have refrained from using Bergson or Deleuze as overwhelming agents in my thesis. Instead, I will employ a general, quotidian philosophical framework for my formal-textual analysis. The conception of time that forms the general philosophical foundation of my thesis is a “common sense” understanding of time. This view, shaped by a broad reading in the field of philosophy and social psychology, is that there are two aspects of time: a pragmatic time that has become an indispensable and irrefutable part of daily life in modern society; and a

²⁵ David Bordwell, “Film Studies and Grand Theory,” and Noël Carroll, “Prospects for Film Theory,” in *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies* ed. David Bordwell and Noël Carroll, (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 29, 58.

personal time that is conditioned by a host of environmental factors (physical, emotional, psychological, cultural). The former has been called clock-time, mathematical time, cosmic time, objective time, spatialized time or, in the Newtonian sense, “absolute time.” This time is the same for everyone (keeping in mind Einstein’s relativity of space and speed) and is generally measured by the movement of objects in space (shadows on a sundial, hands on a clock, earth’s orbit around its axis or around the sun, etc.). I will call this “external time.” The other time has been variously called lived time, experienced time, phenomenological time, psychological time, *durée* (duration) or subjective time, and is unique for each person. There is no standard measurement for this time, but a host of varying, interrelated factors (age, emotional state of mind, psychological conditions, culture, etc.). I will call this “internal time.”²⁶

These time modes (internal & external) will join to provide a full reading of the temporal dimensions of the long take. External time will relate to shot duration and, consequently, the statistical analysis that will inform my definition of long take practice. While internal time will relate to the formal and textual elements that may govern the temporal whole of a long take, and which are, relative to external time, *less* quantifiable. Though my goal is to use this dynamic of internal and external time as a critical-analytical guide of filmic time, it would be impossible not to extend this notion of internal/external time to the film spectator. For each person shares this dualistic sense of time, checking their watch while running to an appointment, or

²⁶This breakdown of time into internal and external does not deny the countless other forms or meanings of time. For example, all living beings have what is commonly referred to as a biological clock that tells them when to do things instinctually. Biological time can be seen as resting somewhere between objective and subjective time. Cornelius Castoriadis explains this multiplicity of time well by referring to ‘imaginary time,’ as that which encompasses all social meanings attributed to time: “Time is always endowed with meaning. Imaginary time is significant time and the time of signification.” “Time and Creation,” *Chronotypes: The Construction of Time*, ed. John Bender and David E. Wellbery (Stanford California: University of Stanford Press, 1991), 50.

unaware of its passing while engrossed in a pleasurable activity. This separation remains theoretical, since at some level one is always conscious of the temporal whole of their existence. For even if deeply engrossed in a pleasurable activity we can “snap” out of our temporal disengagement to momentarily glance at a watch to catch up with clock-time, and then return to our blissful state of flux. At a basic level, internal and external time relates to the film viewing experience relative to one’s degree of *attentiveness*. So if a viewer’s attention (i.e. interest) sways from the screen, they will become more aware of clock-time and consequently be more aware of their physical surroundings, fidget in their seat, glance at their watch, speak to their partner, etc. If they are absorbed in the on-screen activities, external clock-time is less of a foregrounded distraction. Although, as noted earlier and as I will argue in Chapter 3, foregrounding clock-time (‘heightening a viewer’s consciousness of time’) can also have a positive, artistic function in the overall design of a long take.

So although my use of external and internal time relate primarily to textual questions (shot duration, formal matters affecting time, etc.), they have, in turn, a loose counterpart in the shifting time mode a spectator may find themselves in while watching a movie. Combined, this distillation of time into external and internal informs the critical approach that I call ‘philosophical’ formal-textual analysis. With respect to my engagement with theme and textual meaning, I understand philosophy, in the sense proposed by Ian C. Jarvie, not to be a set of doctrines but a method or way of thinking that can be applied to any question or topic.²⁷ Therefore most films have, potentially, something to say of a philosophical nature about the world we live

²⁷Ian C. Jarvie, “Philosophers at the Movies: Metaphysics, Aesthetics, and Popularization,” *Persistence of Vision* Number 5 (Spring 1987): 99. This long essay eventually evolved into the book *Philosophy of the Film*, (New York and London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987) in which Jarvie expands his use of a quotidian rather than academic understanding of philosophy for film, and that “films are ...an excellent vehicle for popular philosophizing” (255).

in. Something about the nature of the world (metaphysics, ontology), knowledge (epistemology), beauty (aesthetics), or value (morals, ethics). However, as Jarvie warns, “interpreting films in a philosophical manner is not to claim all films are philosophical, except in a trivial sense.”²⁸ In the same sense, I do not claim that all films can be fruitfully analyzed by my philosophical formal-textual analysis of the long take and time.

Definitions

I will briefly define some key temporal terms that I will be using throughout the thesis: time, temporality, radical. Time will be used in two senses: 1) in a non-specific, quotidian meaning and 2) in an abstract, philosophical-thematic meaning. The context will of course bring forth the specific meaning. Temporality, in a strict dictionary definition, is the “condition of being temporal.” Temporal is the quality given to objects, events, or actions once they enter the context of time. Hence a past act becomes a “temporal” event. In most cases I will use temporality to refer to quotidian time placed within an artistic context, time concretized into form (i.e. “the temporality of the narrative”). In my use of the phrase *radical* long take practice I do not mean radical in any political sense -i.e. a political position in drastic opposition to the status quo- but to signify an intensive frequency of long take use that is much greater than standard shooting norms. This does not, of course, exclude the possibility of such a film or director expressing radical politics (as have Jean Luc-Godard and Miklos Jançso). All other borrowed terms or neologisms will be defined in their context.

²⁸*Philosophy of the Film*, 257.

Summary of Thesis Aims

The principal focus of my thesis is a rigorous investigation of the interaction between the long take and time at the formal and thematic level. In summary, encompassing the interrelated areas of the long take and narrative time, the long take and thematic time, and long take practice. Each of these areas will be drawn together and exemplified in a three-part case study of *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *Ugetsu*, and *Stalker*. In turn, the close formal-textual analysis of these case studies, which will include contextual statistical analysis (CSA), will be guided by a definition of the long take founded on the qualities of durational complexity, a sense of formal and/or textual completeness, and formal/thematic determinism. Although the insights gained with my philosophical formal-textual analysis will relate specifically to the three case study films, my findings in the area of long take practice can apply to other long take films. In fact, my thesis will be the first extended study to set-up a broad parameter of long take shooting practice. Also of general value will be Chapters 4 and 5, which are, in effect, case studies. Chapter 4 as an original taxonomy culled from a broader film sampling of existing relationships between long take duration and narrative time. And Chapter 5 of how the long take has been used an expressive narrative agent across the industry practice of popular Hollywood cinema. In summary, the progression of my thesis will be as follows: introduction of general thesis subject and aims (Chapter 1); brief overview of field of literature (Chapter 2); expansion of the critical and theoretical approach (Chapter 3); broader-based, question-driven case studies (Chapter 4 and Chapter 5); introduction to the three long take practice case study films (Chapter 6); individual long take practice case studies (Chapter 7, Chapters 8, Chapters 9); and summing up of thesis aims/goals, with further exploratory comments

on long take practice (Chapter 10). The final aim is for the aggregate findings across the core chapters to add substantially to our theoretical and critical understanding of the long take at both the specific (close textual analysis, individual film) and general level (definition, long take practice, narrative structure, narrative time).

Chapter 2. Literature Review

- Introduction
- Subject Area 1: Filmic Time at the Narrative-Structural Level
- Subject Area 2: Long Take Theory and Practice
- Subject Area 3: Philosophy and Film Time
- Conclusion

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

In this brief literature review, I will indicate the specific fields covered, assess how some of the more relevant material will inform my work, and describe what is therein lacking for the purpose of my thesis subject. I will be considering material that deals with the long take and time, or in the case of the latter, *both* filmic time and philosophical time. Philosophy proper, however, is far too huge a field to be considered part of my field of study. Therefore, my immediate concern is with material in film studies that deals specifically with filmic time and the long take. Though this field is rather large, there are no substantial essays or books that deal specifically with the long take and time.¹

For methodological purposes, it is important that I also consider the broader area adjacent to my subject: the general area of filmic time. Although not all of this will be directly relevant to all my thesis, it will help inform certain aspects, such as the relation between the long take and narrative time. Where this field of literature will be least helpful is in the more abstract area of thematic time, which is where the field of philosophy will be of help. Since this is not an auteurist study, books, theses, and journal essays dealing with the directors of my case studies will be analyzed for how they relate to the specifics of my thesis topic in the respective case study

¹David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, at the end of their brief section on the long take in *Film Art*, conclude: "The long take's ability to present, in a single chunk of time, a complex pattern of events moving toward a goal makes shot duration as important to the image's effect as photographic qualities and framing are." This being the case, one wonders why there has been so little attention paid to time and the long take. *Film Art: An Introduction*. 5th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997), 258-263.

chapters. Likewise, any other relevant material will be discussed where they arise within the body of my thesis.

Subject Area 1: Filmic Time at the Structural-Narrative Level

Most of the essays in this category describe the strict formal and structural principles of film time. In general they make similar distinctions, using different terms or adding a nuance to a previous writer's schema. For example, the difference between narrative time and the time it takes for a film to pass through the projector has been referred to, respectively by Ralph Richardson and J.R. Debrix, Alexander Sesonske, Haig Khatchdourian, Jan Mukarovsky, and Seymour Chatman, as: physical time vs. dramatic time, screen time vs. action time, pictorial time vs. plot time, and discourse-time vs. story-time.² The distinctions within film time noted by film theorists can be reduced to three basic types:

- 1) The real or "factual" time of the film's unspooling (physical time, screen-time, pictorial time, time of depiction, or discourse-time)
- 2) The time as dictated by the narrative: (dramatic time, action-time, plot time, time depicted, story-time)
- 3) Time as experienced by the viewer: (psychological time, viewer's time, lived time)

The second category of time has been refined by narratologists into fabula time and syuzhet time (or story time and plot time). This will be defined as it relates

²Ralph Stephenson and J.R. Debrix. *Cinema as Art*, 2d ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1965), 103-139; Sesonske, Alexander. "Time and Tense in Cinema." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 38 no.4; (1980): 419-426; Haig Khatchadourian, "Space and Time in Film." *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 27, no.2 (1987): 169-177; Jan Mukarovsky, "Time in Film." In *Structure, Sign, and Function: Selected Essays by Jan Mukarovsky*. ed. and trans. by John Burbanks and Peter Steiner. (New Haven: Yale University Press, c1977), 191-200; Seymour Chatman. *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1978), 63-79.

to my thesis in Chapter 4. As most commentators note, cinema rarely aligns physical time with dramatic time. Even though the majority of these articles do not go much beyond presenting their version of this narratology tool, they will provide an important foundation to my taxonomy on long take duration and narrative time. Sesonske acknowledges this limitation and points to a gap my thesis aims to address: “A full analysis of time in film would go far beyond this and must certainly include a discussion of felt temporal qualities (psychological time) and the variety of ways in which film creates or evokes this. A fascinating topic, but beyond the scope of this paper.”³

Subject Area 2: Long Take Theory and Practice

My interest here is in descriptive rather than prescriptive theory. Therefore Bazin’s theoretical conjectures on long take realism are not relevant to my thesis; whereas his analytical criticism is. In any case, there is little material dealing directly with long take theory. Henderson’s essay “The Long Take,” written over thirty years ago, is still the single most important essay on this subject. Though Henderson does not deal specifically with the long take and time, he notes “there are many interesting and difficult problems raised by the long take and *mise-en-scène*,” and points the way by noting the fundamental importance of time to *mise-en-scène*:

It is generally thought that the true cultivation and expression of the image as such -as opposed to the *relation between*

³Sesonske, Alexander. “Time and Tense in Cinema,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 38 no.4 (1980): 426.

images...requires the duration of the long take....the long take makes mise-en-scène possible....It is the time necessary for mise-en-scène space.⁴

Henderson never did return to this critical question, but one of these “interesting and difficult problems” has proven to be a major inspiration to this thesis. Henderson is concerned with style, specifically the relation between long take and editing in the work of F.W. Murnau, Max Ophuls, and Orson Welles. However, he does not extrapolate his findings to a conception of long take style that can apply beyond his case studies (though he provides terms that can). My more humble aim is to lay out an understanding of long take practice that can be applied to more than just my three case study films.⁵

One valuable recent essay in the category of long take style, theory and practice is Mark Le Fanu’s “Metaphysics of the ‘long take’: some post-Bazinian reflections.” Le Fanu describes two recent oppositional long take styles in the post-Bazinian evolution of film language: 1) the kinetic or flamboyant long take, and 2) the stationary or quasi-stationary long take. Le Fanu lists several contemporary directors who fit this latter style, but is tentative toward their aesthetic fate. I will argue that, not only can this list be lengthened, but that, in its national and overall stylistic diversity, suggests that the long take syntax is in its healthiest state ever. Although my thesis is not about long take style, I will discuss some of Le Fanu’s points within the context of my concluding remarks on long take practice.

My close formal analysis will make substantial use of statistical analysis. Anyone using statistical analysis is indebted to the groundbreaking work of Barry

⁴Ibid., 49.

⁵Though I am extremely interested with questions of long take style, it would be impossible to come up with a general theory of long take style that would encompass all or most of its greatest and most frequent practitioners in anything but the most general of terms.

Salt.⁶ However, as important as Salt's work was in drawing attention to critical inaccuracies and ill-informed stylistic generalities, his use of statistical analysis falls far short of its potential in helping articulate questions of narrative structure and filmic meaning. Salt arrives at most of his figures (average shot length and percentages of reverse-angles) by means of a 30 minute sampling of the films, a highly suspect methodology.⁷ For example, which section of a film does one choose to draw the sample from? And how can one be sure this sample accurately represents the entire film? David Bordwell and Janet Staiger have already demonstrated the inaccuracies in Salt's method, which is especially problematic for a methodology which aims for scientific accuracy.⁸ But a further problem with this method is that it is incapable of assessing how a particular statistical analysis can change or evolve across the whole of a film and, more importantly, if this change relates to the film's thematic or narrative meaning. This latter aspect of Salt's use of statistical analysis is especially weak, as is evidenced by his uninspired critical application of statistical analysis to the work of Max Ophuls at the end of his book.⁹ I will avoid these weaknesses by using statistical analysis as part of a systematic shot by shot, scene by scene breakdown of the narrative structure, and incorporate these findings into a descriptive and

⁶The bulk of Salt's work on statistical analysis is collected in *Film Style & Technology: History & Analysis*. London : Starword, 1983 (2nd ed. 1992).

⁷Barry Salt, *Film Style & Technology: History & Analysis*, 2nd expanded ed. (Oxford: Starwood, 1992), 226. He does however, say that 400 of the ASL figures in his database were taken from complete films.

⁸ In their review of his book the authors compare Salt's average shot lengths (ASL) to their own ASL based on the complete film. They compare ten US films and five (of seven) Russian films and came up with appreciable differences in three of the ten US films and all five of the Russian films. The first number is Salt's figure: *Back Street* (1932) 23/19, *The Letter* (1940) 18.0/13.3, *Night and Day* (1946) 9/11, *Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks* (1924) 6.0/4.3, *Potemkin* (1925) 4.0/1.9, *By the Law* (1926) 6.5/4.2, *The House on Trubnoi Square* (1928) 4/3, *The New Babylon* (1929) 5.0/3.7. "Toward a Scientific Film History?" in *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* (Summer 1985): 224-237.

⁹"Stylistic Analysis of the Films of Max Ophuls," 297-315 in *Film Style & Technology: History & Analysis*. His "analysis" is nothing more than a chronological listing of quantitative results (ASL, moving camera shots, shot range, etc.) with odd scattered comments and no elaboration of what the quantitative results might mean narratively, thematically, or how they might function as part of the film's narrative system.

interpretive reading of the film –a process which I am calling “Contextual Statistical Analysis” (CSA).

Subject Area 3: Philosophy and Film Time

The general ‘common sense’ philosophy of time that informs my thesis is not indebted to any single philosopher. I do, however, admire Gilles Deleuze and Henri Bergson and find much within their respective philosophical ideas on time stimulating and sympathetic to the core of my thesis. For example, I can not deny that some of my findings concerning the increased visibility of the radical long take practice in contemporary cinema run parallel to Deleuze’s central idea of a paradigmatic shift in post-World War 2 cinema from the movement-image to the time-image. While my project is clearly not “Deleuzian,” some of my findings suggest that perhaps Deleuze may be right about the importance of the time-image in contemporary cinema (or at least, in the importance of *time* in the *image* of contemporary cinema).

But the particular, and in a sense contrasting, idiosyncrasies of Deleuze and Bergson make it impossible for me to accept either as a theoretical or philosophical blueprint for my thesis. Deleuze, with his eclectic thinking style and fanciful neologisms, does not offer a single overriding philosophy or theory of time that can be easily and fruitfully applied to my study as a whole. And with Bergson, I can not reconcile the implications of his epistemology (i.e. intuition over the intellect) with every aspect of my methodology. Which is why, in the end, my use of Bergson and Deleuze will be restricted to adapting some of their ideas to formal-textual and interpretative schemata for certain temporal aspects of the long take. These concepts will be defined as they are applied.

Michael O'Malley's *Keeping Watch*, falling under cultural history rather than philosophy, has served me immensely in understanding the interdisciplinary nature of time studies.¹⁰ In particular, the bearing that the culture of time efficiency at the end of the 19th and early 20th century had on the development of early narrative cinema (standard time, scientific management, time-motion, etc.). For my purposes, I will explore the extent to which this conception of time as an economic commodity bears an influence on the range of long take expressivity in popular narrative cinema. Lutz Bacher's two books¹¹ bring a similar cross-disciplinary approach into tighter focus on cinema, making important observations and drawing conclusions regarding the links between industry/economy and long take style. I hope to intersect these works at the appropriate strands and draw necessary links to enrich my specific subject (mainly in Chapters 3, 5 and 8).

Conclusion

Most existing literature on time and the long take assume one of either two extreme positions 1) a purely formal approach that discusses narrative structure, types of narrative time, etc. or 2) a philosophical approach where cinema is subservient to a philosophical agenda. My approach aims for a marriage between formal and textual parameters of the long take and thematic/philosophical concerns. Existing literature has analyzed filmic time, with most essays arriving at the same conclusions with altered terminology. Although there are a few essays that discuss long take theory and style, none have placed an emphasis on the temporal aspects of the long take, or

¹⁰O'Malley, Michael. *Keeping Watch: A History of American Time*. New York: Penguin Books, 1990. As has Stephen Kern's wonderful book, *The Culture of Time and Space: 1880-1918* (Cambridge: Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983).

¹¹*The Mobile Mise en Scene* (New York: Arno Press, 1978); *Max Ophuls in the Hollywood Studios* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1996).

incorporated narrative temporality and other possible links between the long take and time (thematic, philosophical, psychological). In conclusion, the relative paucity of scholarly material in the area of long take and time will lead me to four main original contributions to film analysis:

- 1) Outlining a more theoretically rigorous and nuanced understanding of the long take
- 2) Offering a rejuvenated critical analysis of my three case study films by demonstrating how a dominant use of the long take is an important (though not exclusive) formal component of each film's particular thematic and/or philosophical treatment of time
- 3) Designing a taxonomy of the structural-formal relations between long take duration and narrative time
- 4) Developing a general parameter for the discussion and analysis of long take practice

Chapter 3. Further Notes on ‘Philosophical’ Formal-Textual Analysis

- Philosophical Preamble
- External Time
- Internal Time
 - Psychological Factors and Narrative*
 - Movement*
- Temporal Tonality: The ‘Quality’ of Time in the Long Take
- Formal-Textual Analysis in Practice: The Trolley Journey Scene from *Stalker*
- Conclusion

CHAPTER 3

FURTHER NOTES ON 'PHILOSOPHICAL' FORMAL-TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Philosophical Preamble

In this chapter, I will delve into the specifics of external and internal time as they relate to my philosophical formal-textual analysis. As such, this chapter will set-up some key formal areas of the critical approach I will take in my case studies, and will demonstrate this with a sample analysis of a scene from my third case study film, *Stalker*. Implicit in my breakdown of external and internal time, is that a long take can not, in all its richness and qualitative dimensions, be defined or determined by duration *alone*. Long can refer to both temporal (duration) and spatial length: “It is a long way from home.” The “long way home” may refer to both physical distance and the time taken to traverse the distance. But whereas the physical distance is constant, the time experience may not *feel* constant. Take, as an example, a train ride to and from a loved one. The physical length (space) is identical both ways. But our changed psychological state of mind -anticipation and eagerness versus sadness- will make one leg of the journey *appear* temporally longer. This same incompatibility between space and time can exist in the temporal perception of a long take.

Though time and space share certain qualities, they are also different in many regards. For example, as George N. Schlesinger notes, order, continuity, and direction are conditions of time but not space (see footnote 5). These differences seem to fade away in film where, through formal and artistic design, time and space acquire each other's qualities. As Erwin Panofsky was the first to observe in 1934, film is the

quintessential time-space art because time is spatialized and space is temporalized.¹

Film is able to condense or expand time and space, individually or in unison. It is able to express those heightened moments where time seems to fly by or stand still, or when time seems to drag (psychological time). Henri Bergson took a different tact in differentiating time and space by stressing the qualitative differences between them when he distinguished between conceptualized time and experienced (or lived) time. According to Bergson the latter time, Duration (*durée*), loses its vital qualities of indivisibility, mobility, change, creativity, and interpenetration, when treated as space, that is, as an homogenous line. In a similar sense, a long take is “spatialized” when it is defined by its duration *alone*, as a line from point-in-time A to point-in-time B.

This is not to say, of course, that we should not treat the space within the shot (depth of field, composition, framing, density, volume, etc.), but rather that we should not treat the time of the shot *as space*. The point is not to eliminate space, which would be foolish and impossible, but to philosophically separate them in a way that is not possible in physical reality. In the field of new physics space and time are inseparable and belong to a space-time continuum. Yet they can, and have been, treated separately by philosophers, psychologists, and cultural theorists.

Temporal or spatial qualities of the image are indeed prioritized within the aesthetic body of respective directors. Andrei Tarkovsky, for example, writes, “One cannot conceive of a cinematic work with no sense of time passing through the shot, but one can easily imagine a film with no actors, music, décor or even editing.”² Like Bergson, Tarkovsky sees time and space as two sets of a polarity linked by their abstract nature, but differentiated by their human usage and meaning. So that at the

¹Erwin Panofsky, “Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures,” in *Film Theory and Criticism*, 3rd ed., ed. Gerald Mast and Marshall Cohen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 218.

²Andrei Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time*, trans. Kitty Hunter-Blair, (London: The Bodley Head, 1986), 113.

experiential level, time has a more direct, emotional link to human consciousness.

Tarkovsky explains, “Time cannot vanish without a trace for it is a subjective, spiritual category; and the time we have lived settles in our soul as an experience placed within time.”³ Such a position implies that while we live in space, space does not live within us, whereas we both live in time and time lives within us.⁴ The point, however, is not to prioritize or essentialize one over the other, but to relate the temporal to the whole of the long take (which can include space, acting, lighting, movement, etc.).⁵

³ Ibid., 58.

⁴ Which raises an interesting philosophical question: is there a sense in which space does “live within us”? We certainly do feel emotional attachment to places/spaces, but usually this attachment grows stronger over the passage of time. We certainly think or feel in spatial terms (“I feel that things are closing in around me”). In fact, in today’s ever increasing image saturated global world, this is becoming ever more prominent. But perhaps because places and spaces have physical properties, we do not internalize them to the same extent as time.

⁵In the technical language of philosophy there has been much written with regard to the nature of time and space and their differences and similarities. The answers, of course, will vary according to the philosopher’s particular vantage, but the consensus is that there are appreciable differences between time and space. One of the better accounts of this debate is *Aspects of Time* by George N. Schlesinger (Indianapolis & Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Co., 1980). He argues that if time and space are compared in the general sense as types of continuum, then there will be similarities. “All occupants of a continua in general occupy points which may stretch or extend over distances which can be divided into intervals.... Typical temporal terms or spatial terms may be translated into these in the following manner: the temporal term ‘duration’ is equivalent to the continuum term ‘extension’; ‘to occur at ‘t’ is equivalent to ‘are at the same point’...(21).” But if we do not restrict ourselves to continuum properties and compare time and space along other properties then we will discover fundamental differences. For example, qualities such as order and direction are present in time but not space. Granted philosophers argue over the direction of time (linear, cyclical, evenly flowing or not, etc.), but Time has a direction. Space does not. (Although all of this gets decidedly sticky at the level of quantum physics.) Organic and inorganic systems that grow or develop (age) are linked in a temporal order that is oriented in a linear (before & after) direction. A person is a baby at point A and a mature adult at point B. No such concept exists in space. “Everything that has a position in time is temporally related to everything else in time. This phenomenon has sometimes been referred to as the ‘unity of time’. Space, however, does not necessarily have such unity” (17). The particulars of these differences, or the relative importance of one to the other or to our understanding of the physical world differs according to the sensibility of the philosopher (rational vs. intuitive, spiritual or religious vs. materialist, Eastern vs. Western) or the philosophical tradition involved (i.e., science, empiricism, metaphysics, aesthetics, etc.). These are very technical issues that remain the province of professional philosophers, physicists, and mathematicians. How you approach the question of time is interwoven with one’s intellectual interests and sensibility, and the particulars of the chosen field of study. However you look at it, the history of thought has proven that time *on its own* is a fascinating and rich area of study. Some thinkers have chosen to study time and space in the ways they overlap; others have treated them separately or given greater weight to one or the other.

External Time

Before moving on to a consideration of the long take's internal time, I would like to make some general remarks on the issue of external time. Filmmaker/theorist David MacDougall writes: "What constitutes a "long take" is obviously an artificial and somewhat arbitrary concept, formed in relation to an average notion of shot length and affected by content and position as well as by duration. Long takes are *perhaps* [my emphasis] better defined by their structural qualities than by their length."⁶ However, with respect to duration MacDougall acknowledges a paradoxical yet necessary blend of intuition and empiricism, quantity and quality: "Duration is perhaps the least important criterion in comparing a static, practically empty frame and a frame crowded with activity. And yet...and yet ... absolute duration does finally matter. It is not wholly subjective and has its own measure of influence upon our reading of shots." In what ways, then, does duration "ultimately matter"?⁷

One could take the charted average shot lengths for historical periods, as Barry Salt has done, and use that average as a gauge to estimate the minimum duration for the long take (double the average, for example). But such a statistical account does

⁶David MacDougall, "When Less is Less: The Long Take in Documentary," *Film Quarterly* 46, no. 2 (Winter 1992-93), 39.

⁷MacDougall relates an interesting 'way' out of his experiences as a documentary filmmaker. While shooting a film in India, MacDougall began to shoot what he called a "shadow" film alongside the actual footage. His initial justification for these "shadow" long takes was that they could always be used as edited footage if necessary. But in reality, "...in the back of my mind they actually constituted an alternative film, a counter-film to the one we were making a way of holding on to qualities which are so often lost when a film is structured for its likely audience" (37). MacDougall feels that something of human value is lost in the process of paring down from hours of rushes to the final edited product. This is not some nebulous "truth" hidden in the external reality, but "positive values perceived in the rushes and intended by the film-maker at the time of shooting but unachieved in the completed film" (41). He lists several positive elements or qualities that are lost when rushes are pared down and duration sacrificed. Some are simply verbal twists on Bazinian theory: the loss of *excess meaning* and the loss of *interpretive space*. The most interesting one is labelled the "Dimensions of Personhood." MacDougall notes that in our daily life we get to know people over time: "Over time, details about other human beings accumulate for us and eventually coalesce into distinct personalities" (43). A film can recreate a similar discovery of personhood in a fictitious microcosm. And within the microcosm of the film, a long take presents an extended block of time for the viewer to get acquainted with character(s).

not exist for every period in American film history, let alone all national cinemas (a formidable task for dozens of lifetimes!). However, I feel that in the end, an *exact* defining durational figure is less important than qualitative measures, for the following reasons:

- a) Once a shot arrives at a certain duration (60" for example), there is no longer a need for quantitative measurement because the difference becomes one of degree. A sixty-second shot and a three-minute shot would both be considered as long takes, even though one is "longer" than the other.
- b) A selective use of the long take shot is fairly easy to pinpoint within a non-long take style film (i.e. at the beginning, end, or for dramatic or kinetic purpose).
- c) If a minimum duration were established –as I have with 25" - most shots of this length would still be dependent on other factors (the internal time) to gauge whether the shot contains the formal and textual properties or complexities usually associated with a long take (i.e. completeness/wholeness, durational complexity, soft formal/thematic determinism).
- d) The longer the duration, the greater the probability that the formal and textual properties or complexities exist. On the other hand, if external time reaches a great length, say five minutes or more, then the shot will have to be considered a long take regardless of whether or not formal or textual complexity exist (i.e. Andy Warhol's minimalist films of the sixties)
- e) I believe most spectators are able to sense a frequent use of the long take based on an intuitive viewing of a film (i.e. being bored, extremely engrossed, physically sensitized, etc.). This is ultimately more important for the film viewing experience than a quantitative measurement.

Internal Time

As MacDougall notes above, though duration is not the decisive element in a long take one can not overlook it because it renders its own “influence upon our reading of shots.” This becomes increasingly the case as sheer external time lengthens. But in the end, more important to an understanding of the long take than a defining durational value is the many other non-metric or less quantifiable elements that live within the shot and render it its sense of being a long take.

As for time...while science usually sticks to the physical time measured by some movement of matter...Zen knows only experienced, subjective time.⁸

In keeping with my “common sense” understanding of time, the above quote conceptualizes time into two senses: an external measurable time and an internal experienced time. For the rest of this chapter I will concentrate on some elements and variables that are part of a long take’s internal time.

Psychological Factors and Narrative

As noted earlier, an important consideration for a critical analysis of the long take stems from the often-noted distinction between “slow” and “fast” time. When we are engaged in a pleasurable activity, time seems to move quickly, or for the moment, we appear to be outside the fold of time (feeling of “timelessness”). If engaged in something non-pleasurable or uncomfortable, time seems to move slowly. Though

⁸Seize Ohe, “Time, Temporality and Freedom,” *Time in the Philosophies*, ed. Honorat Aguessy, et al, (Paris: Unesco, 1977), 87.

there are other considerations to the psychological dimension of time (for example, the noted positive/negative expectation, or age), in general, the more engrossed we are in a pleasurable activity, the less conscious we are of time passing, and hence the “faster” or “more pleasurable” time seems to flow.

Herbert Zettl articulates the “major factors that influence the magnitude of the subjective time vector –that is, whether you experience an event as ‘brief’ or ‘long’...as (1) event intensity, (2) event density, and (3) experience intensity.”⁹ The *event intensity* relates to the amount of energy exhibited within the event. Hence a scene of a battle between one hundred warriors will have more energy than a scene of two warriors signing a peace treaty. In such a case we will usually be more involved in the high-energy event than the low-energy event, and consequently be more distanced from clock time in a high-energy event. The *event density* relates to the amount and variety of stimulation within an event. “A high-density event is one in which many things occur within a relatively brief clock-time....A movie or television sequence with many shifts of point of view, location, or angles is...a high-density event....Hence, we often perceive high-density events as “shorter” than low-density events.”¹⁰ *Experience intensity* “refers to the number of relevant experiences we go through ... and to the relative depth or impact such events have on us....The more relevant the event is for you, the more intense your involvement in it is likely to be.”¹¹ Hence *experience intensity* is less dependent on an event’s energy or density level than on how much the event means to you. Therefore the time spent waiting for an exam to begin will be more intense than the same amount of time spent waiting for a bus to arrive. And consequently, “low involvement means more awareness of clock

⁹Herbert Zettl, *Sight, Sound, Motion: Applied Media Aesthetics*, 2nd ed. (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Pub. Co., c1990), 244.

¹⁰Ibid., 245.

¹¹Ibid.

time, and high involvement, less awareness of clock time.”¹² Zettl concludes this section with a point that quickly recalls why esteemed time scholar J.T. Fraser called time the “familiar stranger:”

That we usually experience a high-intensity event as having no time or sometimes as lasting an eternity is one of the paradoxes of subjective time.¹³

This latter quote speaks directly to the ‘durational complexity’ factor of a long take, where a rhythmically slow paced (or static) long take of exceptional length and little action can still feel durationally ‘short’ (timeless, suspended, mesmerizing, etc.).

Though such factors can not speak to every filmic instance, a similar psychological dimension can be cautiously applied to the long take. One way of doing this is through narrative. One element common to all narrative films is that they “tell a story.”¹⁴ The felt duration of a long take is often inexorably linked to the movement and progression of this story. From the consideration of psychological time, narrative time is perceived (felt) to move faster than pure screen time. That is, when a long take also engages an audience in the dynamics of plotting, causality, and character development, (and exhibits elements of “high-event intensity, density, and experience”), the audience will be less likely to be conscious of the shot’s external time (clock time).

So the stronger and the more intense the “narrative pull,” the less likely that the shot will be perceived as a long take. An extreme example would be that a long take of a blank, white screen would feel durationally longer than an equivalent length

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴And as E.M. Forster said, all stories involve temporality: “I am only trying to explain that as I lecture now I hear that clock ticking or do not hear it ticking, I retain or lose the time sense; whereas in a novel there is always a clock. The author may dislike his clock. Emily Brontë in *Wuthering Heights* tried to hide hers. Sterne in *Tristram Shandy*, turned his upside down. Marcel Proust, still more ingenious, kept altering the hands.... All these devices are legitimate, but none of them contravene our thesis: the basis if a novel is a story, and a story is a narrative of events arranged in time sequence.” *Aspects of a Novel* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1962), 37-38.

long take from any narrative film; even one with very little action, such as the opening 48” static shot of *Stranger Than Paradise* (1984).¹⁵ Noël Burch makes the similar point: “the viewer’s estimate of the duration of a shot is conditioned by its *legibility*.... an uncomplicated two-second close-up will appear to be longer than a long shot of exactly the same duration that is swarming with people, a white or black screen will appear to be longer still.”¹⁶ However, the point of a theory or critical method that considers these other “non-metric” factors (or “less metric”) is not meant to be singularly defining, but rather to give us a fuller understanding of the long take in all its aesthetic richness and complexity.

The question here is not whether or not a spectator is merely bored, but to incorporate the relationship between the long take and the immediacy of narrative development. (The full implication of this will be discussed in Chapter 5, where the possibility of values and pleasures beyond the purely narrative will be invoked.) A term with interesting repercussions in the consideration of psychological time, narrative, and the long take is the “efficiency factor.” The word efficiency in consort with time relates to the changing perception of time that occurred slowly yet dramatically in North America between the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. The post-industrial revolution period saw a myriad of changes in the fields of science, technology, economics, industry and telecommunications that forever changed people’s attitudes to and understanding of time. In ideological terms, this new understanding focused on time as a commodity, something to save, control,

¹⁵In this shot a young woman with her back to the camera stares at an airport runway in the background. One plane is parked on the runway and a second is seen entering the frame right. She picks up her bag and suitcase and exits the frame left. The shot lingers for a few seconds on the empty frame. The parked plane begins to move slowly and the shot cuts.

¹⁶Noel Burch, *Towards a Theory of Film Practice*, trans. Helen R. Lane and introd. Annette Michelson (New York and Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1973), 52; quoted in Torben Grodal, *Moving Pictures: A New Theory of Film Genres, Feelings, and Cognition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 147.

manage, and exploit to one's advantage. It was not something to waste, fritter away, or disrespect. Efficiency became a hallmark of twentieth century living:

The Progressive era felt a near obsession with the subject of efficiency. As one historian of the period has written, "efficient and good came closer to meaning the same thing in these years than in any other period in American history."¹⁷

Michael O'Malley (and others) has charted how this mindset toward efficient time translated into the standardized way of making motion pictures in Hollywood during the mid-teens (perfected by producer-director Thomas Ince). Narratives had to be streamlined to run smoothly and efficiently.

Narrative films mirrored [Frederick] Taylor's understanding of time. They carved up the ordinary, standard time and duration of everyday events and then re-formed it according to the director's particular agenda....In the movies, as in Taylorism, "wasted" footage wound up cut out, while only those most "productive" shots survived. The two techniques, time study by stopwatch and movie editing in frames per second, are directly analogous -each lays out time for dissection and reassembly.¹⁸

Without assuming the evaluative connotation of the term efficiency, I believe that how time is used in relation to the narrative and the spectator's own value judgement concerning time and its usage (their temporal "ethics" if you will), greatly affects how a film's pacing is perceived (slow, boring, exciting, engaging, etc.). And

¹⁷Michael O'Malley, *Watching Time: A History of American Time* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 164.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 228.

this has shaped how the majority of popular films treat time as a value system.¹⁹ This aspect (efficiency) of gauging spectator subjectivity can be a helpful index of film time at the general level because it is couched in a cultural context. This cultural context includes the different reasons why people of a common culture go to the movies, which itself is connected to values of time dispensation. Of course the context I quoted above is a North American one, but the broader issue of industrialization and modernity is common to all developed countries.

The O'Malley quote above is in reference to early narrative cinema, but this notion of narrative efficiency still exists in much of today's cinema. As documentary filmmaker/theorist David MacDougall writes, "...there is a certain threshold of narrative or expository efficiency beyond which the motivated meaning of the shot is exhausted. If the shot unexpectedly remains on the screen *without further developments* [my emphasis], we may feel impatience or annoyance, during which we perhaps look away or withdraw our attention."²⁰ However, narrative efficiency, a hallmark across classical and popular cinema, can not be applied to *all* cinema in the same way. While the MacDougall quote may hold true for popular cinema, for the art cinema these moments "without further developments" may be integral to the film's thematic, characterisation, stylistic gesture, or, simply as formal experiments. Though art cinema does not have the same system of codes and conventions as the musical or

¹⁹This is evident right down to the correlation between running time and genre of film. Modern values of time, as something not to "waste," routinely determines film length, with more prestigious films (i.e. biographies, historical epics) having a longer average running time than popular genres (i.e. horror, comedy). Hence popular films that run over 2 ½ hours are invariably historical epics, war dramas, or bios of "important" people. The assumption here in terms of time value is that people are willing to spend the surplus time if the subject matter is deemed worthy (i.e. important) enough. If you were to sample the average running time of the comedy or horror genre against the historical epic or biopic, I am certain that the latter would have a considerably higher average running time. The same principle can be seen in the Academy Awards, that bastion of Hollywood self-worth. The average running time for the Academy Award winning Best Film from 1928 to 2000 is 140 minutes. Of the 73 films to win a Best Film Oscar," only 22 run under two hours while 10 run over three hours. With 100 minutes as a hypothetical average running time for English language films across all of film history –a liberal estimate- only three of the 70 Academy Award winning best films are under this length.

²⁰David MacDougall, 40.

the western, it does share general aesthetic and formal conventions. One of these is the fragmentation of narrative and the breakdown of classical plot construction and character development. So that within an art cinema context, there may be a greater generic tolerance for long takes that are not driven by a specific narrative purpose, character point of view, or emotion (suspense for example). Hence it would be unwise to apply the exact same value of narrative efficiency (or 'boredom factor') to the art cinema as one would to classical cinema.²¹ Torben Grodal notes this when discussing 'temporal evaluation' across different films. Grodal writes,

Evidently, if the same image is seen for minutes it will ordinarily be experienced as 'long' during viewing (if evaluated as painfully dull)....But some of the features creating salience presuppose special viewer-skills and special motivation. Resnais' film *L'Année dernière à Mareinbad* may be experienced by some viewers as long and dull....But others would enjoy finding clues to a reconstruction of fabula and to the mysteries of the visuals....²²

A possible term for considering narrative efficiency that could account for the generic discrepancies is "narrative plenitude" (coined in discussion by Victor Perkins). For example, if we were to make a list of what is "narrativized" across different types of films, from popular cinema, to art cinema, to experimental cinema, we would see that the length of the list would vary consistently according to type. Generally speaking, a popular film would have a longer list of characters, plots, subplots, etc., than an art film (which in turn would have a longer list than an experimental film). In relative contrast, as the narrativity decreases, the material process of cinema -time, space, light, movement- is fore-grounded. When stripped of

²¹Even though the specialized exhibition history of the art cinema (repertoire theatres, museums, art houses, classrooms, archival houses) and knowledge of art cinema conventions (what art historian Ernst Gombrich refers to as a spectator's "mental set") would suggest that a *willing* art cinema spectator should have a higher tolerance for narrative *inefficiency*. What is most probable is that an *unwilling* art cinema spectator will not have the tolerance!

²²*Moving Pictures: A New Theory of Film Genres, Feelings, and Cognition*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 146-47.

narrativity these processes become the “content” of cinema. Which is what happens in abstract and experimental cinema, while the material process is minimized in popular film.²³ Narrative plenitude helps deal with generic differences by relativizing narrative efficiency. In this way the relationship between the long take and the immediacy of narrative development will be dependent on the overall importance and drive of the specific narrative.

I have dealt with narrative efficiency/plenitude at some length, but will not apply the concept across my whole study. For two main reasons: 1) the above discussed generic imbalance 2) and the fact that the discourse belongs properly to narratology, which is beyond the interest and design of this thesis. I will not abandon it altogether, but broach aspects of this issue (production method, industrialisation, and narrative efficiency) in relation to how it impacts on questions of long take style and practice in Chapter 5. I will deal with the issue of narrative efficiency in its broader cultural context in my case study of *The Magnificent Ambersons* (Chapter 7), because the issue bears a particular affinity to that film’s thematics of efficiency and progress.

Movement

As noted, “narrative plenitude” will differ in the relative sense from popular cinema to art cinema. However, of a more general, theoretical value is something that can be considered *relatively* within and between narrative types: movement.

Movement can apply to activity within the frame (actors, objects) and to the frame

²³It is here that Andy Warhol’s films are interesting in the way they straddle the line between narrative and process. His films have a semblance of story or action -a man receives oral sex in *Blow Job*- but the narrative is so minimal in relation to its duration that the processes of film, time/duration, space, movement (in its absence), are fore-grounded.

itself (camera movement, zooming, rear/front projection). Movement, which is also central to time, is even used in reference to a quickly paced film: “the narrative moves” (not a term one is likely to hear in reference to too many art films).

Considering movement, instead of or alongside narrative plenitude and efficiency, is another helpful tool in gauging long take temporality and the interaction between external and internal time.

An important quality in this respect is the sense of movement as it exists within an individual long take, or the teleology of a shot. The speed, direction, and purpose of a moving camera shot can greatly affect spectator perception of time. To varying degrees, a long take is driven to its end by a particular design that may relate to character, narrative, mood, or theme. In most cases a fore-grounded movement into a character or object calls attention to the end point. Where is it going and why? If it is taking a long time to arrive there, for what purpose? This teleology of the shot is important to a shot’s temporal barometer. I will give two contrasting examples. Hitchcock’s two famous lengthy crane shots, to the drummer’s twitching eye in *Young & Innocent* and to the key clasped in Ingrid Bergman’s hand in *Notorious*, are virtuoso shots in their majestic sweep and inherent drama. At first we do not know why the camera is moving so deliberately, so assertively, but the shots conclude with a grand pay-off that is both kinetically exciting and, in the case of *Young & Innocent*, narratively important. The sense of time is manipulated for suspense purposes, and the audience remains fully engaged. The shot does not cause boredom or unwanted anxiety because it has, to quote Frank Kermode, “a sense of an ending.”²⁴

In contrast to these two examples is the first shot (41”) after the trolley scene in Tarkovsky’s *Stalker*. The trolley scene sees three travellers, simply called the

²⁴Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967).

Writer, the Scientist, and the titular Stalker, travel from the city outskirts to a forbidden area called the Zone. The trolley scene cuts from a travelling close-up of the Writer's face, to a view of the Zone. The shot continues with the same right to left camera movement picturing the surrounding landscape. The camera comes to a full stop with the sound of the trolley. The shot lingers for a few seconds and then pans very slowly right to end on a cross-shaped telegraph wire in the foreground and an abandoned truck in the middleground. This long take is not driven by a *specific* narrative purpose, character point of view, or emotion (though I will argue a thematic-character based purpose in Chapter 9). It does not have the same sense of teleology or end purpose, hence time is foregrounded in ways that it is not in the Hitchcock examples.

Another factor in the spectator's perception of time within a long take relates to the duration of routine or quotidian actions. Most human actions duplicated in a narrative take less time than they would in reality. For example, such acts as a person walking up to their top floor apartment, getting dressed, moving through their apartment, or making a phone call, will appear in a condensed time form in film. As spectators we are psychologically accustomed to this "time-saving" quality of film narrative, which is dependent on what Torben Grodal refers to as act-schemata or situation-schemata (how an action appears in film) and perceptual-schemata (our sense of perceiving such an act based on its real-life length). How spectators perceive film time is "linked to the perception and schematization of events taking place in a scene, in order to evaluate the 'speed' of acts and processes."²⁵ Grodal adds that though we have a standard for some actions, such as a man running or walking or an object falling, the standard for other quotidian acts such as walking up stairs, entering

²⁵Grodal, 142.

or leaving a room, or waking up, is not well defined. However, “these diffuse standards for ‘speed of scene’ will provide a backdrop for pace.... [and] might be dependent not only on experienced real-life length but also on narrative competence, because viewers can ‘chunk’ elements of act-schemata by experience, contrary to the absolute standards for perceptual processes.”²⁶ Obvious deviations such as fast or slow motion register easily as temporal dilations or compressions. But if routine actions take longer to perform than our usual experience of them in reality or in cinema, or do not seem to answer any immediate narrative concerns, there is a high probability that we will become bored or more conscious of this “surplus” time. This is, for example, taken to an extreme by Andy Warhol in *Eat* (1963) or *Empire* (1964).²⁷

An exception to this rule is when the stretching out of an apparently insignificant act serves a specific narrative or generic function (suspense, comedy). For example, in *Mon Oncle* Jacques Tati plays Mr. Hulot, a simpleton who lives in a top floor apartment in the city’s old quarter. To reach his apartment Mr. Hulot must make a circuitous trip up a convoluted staircase. Tati films the painstaking 60” walk with a static camera from an extreme distance, but fills the frame with well-timed visual gags that justify the inordinate duration devoted to such a quotidian event. Otherwise, if a routine or quotidian action takes the same amount of duration or longer than it would according to our usual perceptual schemata then, all things being equal, time will be fore-grounded. Editing can also prolong the duration of an event (with cutaways, for example). But the long take can stretch an everyday action in real

²⁶Ibid., 143.

²⁷Ivone Margulies dedicates a book, *Nothing Happens*, to this aesthetic, which she calls “minimal hyperrealism”: “Nothing happens: this definition of the everyday has often appended to films and literature in which the representation’s substratum of content seems at variance with the duration accorded it. Too much celluloid, too many words, too much time, is devoted to “nothing of interest” (21).

continuous time to the point where its duration becomes alien to our usual cinematic experience of it.²⁸ A cinematic action performed in long take, stripped of any precise narrative purpose, kinetic energy, or perceptible “teleology,” will, in most cases, heighten awareness of clock time (external time). In some cases this can produce the negative effect of weakening spectatorial attentiveness. If, however, the temporal languor is artistically treated to serve a textual or thematic purpose, then the end result can be aesthetically justified (and pleasing to certain tastes). I will demonstrate a few of these contexts later below.

The study of movement also provides theoretical symmetry in relating peripherally to Deleuze’s philosophical speculations on film and time. Deleuze offers two theoretical biases or modes for cinema, the movement-image and the time-image, the former dominating in the pre-WW2 period, the latter during the post-WW2 period. The former cinema, which finds its archetype in the Hollywood genre film, is dependent on movement and action. Characters in the movement-image are placed in narrative positions where they routinely perceive things and situations, react, and take action in a direct fashion to the events around them.²⁹ In the movement-image, time is determined and measured by movement. This seems to even extend to the technical and formal terms of the classical continuity system (the match cut, the cut on action or movement, the reaction shot, the eye-line match, etc.). In the time-image, which finds its archetype in the European modernist or art film, characters find themselves in situations where they are unable to act and react in a direct, immediate way, leading to what Deleuze calls a breakdown in the sensor-motor system of the movement-

²⁸Though to some extent we gauge the time of a film action on first-hand, real-life length, an equally important barometer of time standard is previous cinematic experiences of the act.

²⁹ In conversation with Victor Perkins he cast this quality of popular cinema in a more philosophical reflection, by referring to these narratives as giving expression (and belief) in the “power of human agency.”

image.³⁰ To quote Jeffrey Bell, a breakdown in the centering “upon the motion of either the characters or objects presented in the film”³¹ In the time-image, rational or measurable temporal links between shots, the staple of the movement-image, gives way to “incommensurable,” irrational links.

The result is that with the link of movement to narrative action severed, “Time ceases to be derived from the movement, it appears in itself and itself gives rise to *false movements*....”³² The expression of movement and time in certain long takes aligns itself with Deleuze’s theoretical-historical breakdown. In anticipation of some of my case study findings, it is safe to say there is *less* movement (kinetic energy, sensory-motor links) in some films that employ extensive long takes (in the radical long take practice), than in those that are shot with a quicker cutting rate. And, since to my knowledge, there are very few, if any, radical long take films made before World War 2,³³ this aligns with Deleuze’s historical positioning of the time-image as post-World War 2 phenomena. I should clarify, however, that Deleuze’s phrase “time ceases to be derived from movement” should not be taken literally. Things still ‘move’ in the time-image (although, as we shall see, much slower in most radical long take practice films), and time may be sometimes expressed through movement (as

³⁰ Which accounts for the many moments of characters waiting, in transit, or meandering in the post neo-realist modernist film (Michelangelo Antonioni for example).

³¹ Jeffrey Bell, “Thinking With Cinema: Deleuze and Film Theory,” *Film-Philosophy Salon* book review of *Iris 23* (Spring 1997), “Gilles Deleuze, Philosopher of Cinema,” [review on-line]; available from <http://www.mailbase.ac.uk/lists/film-philosophy/files/paper.bell.html> Internet.

³² Gilles Deleuze, “Preface to the English edition,” *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*. trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta. (London: The Athlone Press, 1989), i. To complete Deleuze’s thought, “Even the body is no longer exactly what moves; subject of movement or the instrument of action, it becomes rather the developer [*révélateur*] of time, it shows time through its tirednesses and waitings (Antonioni).”

³³ Made in 1939 and with an ASL of 59”, Kenji Mizoguchi’s *The Story of the Last Chrysanthemums* is on the borderline of Deleuze’s historical breakdown. *Caravan* by Erik Charrell (1934), has an ASL of 37”, but I am uncertain of its status as a radical long take practice film because I have not seen it. I owe the ASL rating to David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, Kristin Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 62. My guess is that Carl Dreyer’s *Ordet* (1955), with an ASL of 68”, is the first post-WW2 radical long take practice film.

Deleuze himself demonstrates), only time is no longer reduced to the ‘sensory-motor’ movements of the classic continuity narrative system.

There are less theoretical or historically conventional ways of making a similar point. Richard Maltby and Ian Craven note how the history of American popular film, from its origins on through the Western, slapstick comedy, and musical, placed great value on movement (“cinema’s first ‘production value’”):

Hollywood gives movement a much higher status than European cinema, calling its product movies or motion pictures rather than films, the term generally used by European institutions. Likewise, the most characteristic forms of Hollywood cinema display a remarkable consistency in their commitment to the moving image.³⁴

Jean Mitry made a similar point more than thirty years ago, echoing Deleuze’s ‘movement-image’: “At the beginning of cinema, pure physical movement –in chase films and the early Westerns- was the essence, the mainspring uniting or dividing the heroes. Nowadays, mobility in time must be the dynamic motivation of the facts, following the forces and impulses of a more or less determinant praxis.”³⁵

Temporal Tonality: The ‘Quality’ of Time in the Long Take

I will now theorize the artistic treatment of some of the above “psychological” factors of time in the long take. By this, I mean arrive at a generalised understanding of how a director uses formal and textual properties to shape and at times guide how a spectator may experience the passage of time in a long take. Included in this will be

³⁴Richard Maltby and Ian Craven, *Hollywood Cinema* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1995), 238.

³⁵Jean Mitry, *The Aesthetics and the Psychology of the Cinema*, 1963, trans. Christopher King, from abridged edition of *Esthétique et psychologie du cinéma*; 1990, (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997), 355.

those moments where, as noted in Chapter 1, a viewer's consciousness of time is 'heightened.' This theoretical articulation is offered with the understanding that it can cut across all variances of the long take practice (dialectical, synthetic, and radical). The theory posits that the felt experience of time in a long take is the result of an artistically designed choice that is conditioned by *the nature and content of spectator engagement*. The 'nature' of the engagement can alternate between intensive and contemplative, active and passive, rational and sensual, and continuous and intermittent. The 'content' of the engagement includes story, plot, and character development, with varied and kinetic action and events; and more abstract concerns such as mood, theme, subtext, and setting, with static or slowly varied action and events. Therefore temporal tonality encompasses the full range of articulation in a long take (from narrative to mood, theme, etc.). I will refer to this artistic treatment of time as 'temporal tonality.'

The guiding belief is that a director consciously exploits temporal tonality according to the dramatic and artistic needs of narrative, theme, or philosophical viewpoint. The central barometer for this fluctuation is the nature and content of engagement with the shot in question, with engagement considered from the perspective of how a film/filmmaker achieves it. At one extreme range of temporal tonality is the long take with diverse action, kinetic movement, rapt dialogue, important plot points, or quick variance in image scale, where the viewer will normally be so engaged that their consciousness of time outside these unfolding events will be minimised. At the other extreme range of temporal tonality is the long take with a low intensity level, little kinetic energy, little plot development, or dialogue, or a very gradual variance in the image, where the viewer becomes less

engaged in a conventional dramaturgical sense, and the sense of time outside the unfolding events becomes greater. The claim, then, is that the temporal tonality of a long take is artistically designed to fluctuate between these two ranges and engage a viewer's consciousness of time somewhere between being greatly aware and nominally aware of 'time passing.'

However, the long take rarely operates wholly at one extreme or the other. I can think of no long take where the viewer is so engaged with the filmic experience that they completely transcend 'into' the events and become oblivious to their real life existence (that they are sitting in a theatre, that someone is seated next to them, that they have a business meeting the next morning, etc.). Or that a spectator is so disinterested with the events and becomes so inattentive that they are oblivious to the fact that there is an image in front of them causing them to feel the way they are. For this to occur there would have to be an extraordinary occurrence (drugged or in a state of euphoria for the former, asleep, comatose, or unconscious for the latter). One thing that remains clear is that this (or any) theory can not *simplify* the experience of time in the long take. For even when the quality of time in the shot appears one way ('fast'/intense or 'slow'/passive), it may produce an opposite effect on the spectator's experience or estimation of time (which speaks directly to the 'durational complexity' factor of a long take).

In a sense, the intent of this theorisation is to account for what can be best defined as the 'emotional quality' of time within the shot. For example, it is often the case that the emotions elicited in a long take -hope, fear, loss, anticipation, patience, regret, etc.- can affect how a viewer relates to the experience of time within the shot. Certain emotions that suggest 'future' time may cause a deeper engagement and a

sense of 'fast' time; other emotions that suggest 'past' time may cause a more distant engagement and sense of 'slow' time.

A fine example of a long take which builds a tension between different levels of temporal tonality, is the "Strawberry Shortcake" scene from *The Magnificent Ambersons*. The elements that render time a 'fast' temporal tonality in this long take are: the constant dialogue, the references in the dialogue to other central characters that gives the dialogue a sense of direct plot advancement, the subtext (Fanny attempting to extract information about Eugene), Fanny's hysteria, and the oddly captivating action (George's gluttonous eating of the strawberry shortcake). The elements that render a 'slow' temporal tonality in this long take are: the mainly static camera, the little kinetic energy within the frame, and the extreme duration of 4'25" (all which form an integrated relationship to the scene's implicit theme of containment, dealt with in Chapter 7). Perhaps only the most perceptive spectator will pick up all of these elements on a first viewing. But even a less perceptive viewer will feel some of the tension that is at play within this long take, and this will cause them to fluctuate between states of being more/less aware of time passing.³⁶

There are also exceptions where being made aware of time passing can act much like 'fast' time, as when foregrounded time becomes either a direct narrative plot point or thematic element. The latter case are films which contain what I call 'time dependent' narratives, where the narrative is structured around a temporal deadline which a character (or characters) must race against or is placed in opposition

³⁶ This may be a good time to introduce a distinction between the temporal experience of *viewing* a long take and the temporal experience of *remembering* a long take. It is during this latter experience, especially with recent sophisticated replay facilities, that one can combine critical analysis with reflection to arrive at an informed understanding of the formal and textual elements that were at play in shaping our temporal viewing experience. But there is a sense in which this critical, intellectual recreation of the temporal experience can never fully appropriate the initial, more intuitive temporal viewing experience.

to. These include such films as *High Noon* (1952, Fred Zinnemann), *The Set-Up* (1949, Robert Wise), *D.O.A.* (1950 Rudolph Mate), *The Big Clock* (1945, John Farrow), *Cléo From 5 to 7* (1962, Agnès Varda), *Running Time*, and *Run Lola Run* (1998, Tom Tykwer). For example, the frequent cuts to the clock in *High Noon* or *Run Lola Run*, which underscore the real time plot of the film and the narrative importance of noon time (or the twenty minute deadline in *Run Lola Run*). There is no distinction here in cutting pace, since some of the above films rely greatly on the long take, while others do not. In many other conventional and/or quickly paced films, time is foregrounded as a narrative element (to serve an important plot deadline for example), yet the films do not display any of the other noted qualities associated with a slow temporal tonality (little kinetic energy, minimal plot advancement, no character development, contemplative engagement, etc.). These cases can also be explained in the Deleuzian account of the movement-image, where time is a by-product of movement, and time is expressed through movement in every sense (how the story ‘moves,’ how the characters move, how the camera moves, etc.).

An important gauge for the level and nature of spectatorial engagement, which strongly conditions temporal tonality, is the sense of purpose connected to perception, or the ‘purposiveness’ aspect of perception (which relates to the earlier discussion of a shot’s teleology).³⁷ If at every moment within the long take we are fully aware of the shot’s purpose, of why we are watching, our attention will not stray. The purpose does not need to be excessively obvious, and in fact should contain some ‘mystery’, but the *why* of watching must be clear –even if retroactive. When this occurs the viewer is fully attuned to the shot’s seamless orchestration of time at the service of the event. When an audience becomes baffled, or left wondering as to the ‘why’ of perception,

³⁷ This term was offered to me by Victor Perkins during a conversation.

time becomes foregrounded and made 'visible' as a 'thing in itself' beyond the events. The distinction to make is in the nature of the time being 'foregrounded'. But this is a difficult distinction to articulate because, as the following quote from Gregory Currie implies, time always remains a design of the shot: "...individual shots, so long as they last, must, in virtue of their own duration, imply something about the duration of events depicted, though the implications can be utterly trivial."³⁸ But when the shot is 'consuming' time with a *less apparent* reason, the awareness of one's personal, subjective time may be foregrounded (if only momentarily).

However, there are clearly moments when a director *will want* a certain heightened awareness of time, or slowing down of time, for a whole range of potential reasons (to create tension, or suspense, or impatience, or uncertainty, or narrative ambiguity, or even boredom). Which is why this theory is not, in itself, evaluative. I do not mean that one experience of time, say passive and contemplative, implies a complete aesthetic disengagement with the on-screen events and consequently boredom and disinterest. Or that another experience of time, say active and intensive, implies constant, unwavering interest. This distinction also does not imply that the content of one or the other remains 'outside' or 'beyond' the narrative. As I will argue in Chapter 5, it is critically and ontologically treacherous to disassociate theme, mood, tempo, pace, and setting from narrative proper. The experience of time in a long take may sometimes unfold quickly, where time seems 'fast,' or unfold 'slowly' or lethargically, but I am not interested in the knotty question of what makes 'slow' time boring for a particular viewer and not for another (or why). My goal is rather to establish an analytical position where 'slowness' can also be seen as an integral part

³⁸ Gregory Currie, *Image and Mind: Film, Philosophy and Cognitive Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 102-103.

of a long take's overall artistic design. In short, to articulate those moments where the qualities of slow temporal tonality are used to a positive artistic effect.

In this latter respect, reasons not normally associated with conventional aesthetic design, such as 'boredom' or 'disengagement,' can have an artistic function within a long take, albeit for more limited or esoteric tastes. Writer/essayist Phillip Lopate discusses one such function with the *mise-en-scène* style of directors Kenji Mizoguchi, Max Ophuls, F.W. Murnau, Carl Dreyer, Orson Welles, Jean Renoir and Roberto Rossellini, all exponents of the long take. For Lopate, in some of these films an aspect of 'disengagement' normally associated with boredom placed him "in contact with a habit of mind that I may as well call spiritual, and a mental process suspiciously like meditation."³⁹ I will extract a lengthy quote to explain Lopate's point:

It may sound farfetched to speak of watching a movie as a meditative discipline...but parallels do exist. There is a familiar type of meditation called one-pointedness, which focuses the meditator's attention through the repetition of a single sound or mental image. Yet another meditation practice encourages the sitter to let thoughts fall freely and disorientedly, without anchoring them to any one point. The films of Mizoguchi, say, seem to me a fusion of these two methods: by their even, level of presentation of one sort of trouble after another, they focus the viewer's mind on a single point of truth, the Buddhist doctrine of suffering; and by their extreme cinematographic fluidity, they arouse a state akin to free fall.

...At first I used to resist my mind's wandering during such films, thinking I was wasting the price of admission. But just as in Buddhist meditation one is instructed not to brush aside the petty or silly thoughts that rise up, since these "distractions" are precisely the material of the meditation, so I began to allow my movie-watching mind to yield more freely to daily preoccupations, cares, memories that arose from some image association. Sometimes I might be lost to a personal mental thread for several minutes before returning with full attention to the events onscreen; but when I did come back, it was with a refreshed consciousness, a deeper level of feeling. What *Diary of a Country Priest* taught me was that certain kinds of movies

³⁹ Phillip Lopate, *Totally, Tenderly, Tragically* (New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1998), 78.

–those with austere aesthetic means; an unhurried, deliberate pace; tonal consistency; a penchant for long shots as opposed to close-ups; an attention to backgrounds and milieu; a mature acceptance of suffering as fate –allowed me more room for meditation.”⁴⁰

A less esoteric artistic use of boredom and/or disengagement is when an experience of ‘slow’ temporal tonality is effectively used to transmit an on-screen character’s state of subjectivity. If the rhythm or pace of a long take slows down considerably and the spectator becomes aware of the physical viewing time, yet still remains engaged with the image, the viewer may feel this fleeting moment of their own subjective time, as being concomitant with the on-screen character’s subjectivity. We saw an example of this at work in the final long take from *The Third Man*. In this case, the excessive length of the long take, coupled with other noted aspects of the shot, makes it feel as if it is representing Holly Martins’ heightened state of temporal consciousness. Even though the shot is not a conventional subjective point of view, the temporal tonality helps us to *feel* time passing as it must feel for Martins. This strategy is especially effective and appropriate when dealing with ‘deep’ subjective states: quiet moments where characters become isolated in their thoughts and the mise-en-scène envelopes the viewer in this inner moment. I will later demonstrate this with the “Homecoming” scene in *Ugetsu*. In concluding with the artistic treatment of ‘non-conventional’ cinematic design in temporal tonality (boredom, disengagement, or ennui), I would add a handful of long take directors operating at this level to Phillip Lopate’s list: Andrei Tarkovsky, Alexandr Sokurov, Bela Tarr, Chantal Ackerman, Tsai Ming-liang, Hou Hsiao-hsien, Abbas Kiarostami, Theo Angelopoulos, and later (post-1980) Jean-Luc Godard. The cinematic experience Lopate described,

⁴⁰ Ibid., 78-79.

specifically the moments where his attention would ‘wander’ from the onscreen events, belongs to the type of engagement I have characterised as contemplative, passive, sensual, and intermittent, and where the viewer is more likely to become conscious of time beyond the on-screen events, of time *within their self*.⁴¹

In the above examples, I have concentrated on this particular type of engagement (contemplative, passive, etc.), but this is only one range of the many variances in nature and content of engagement in a long take. Which serves to demonstrate that an oscillation of temporal tonality is an integral artistic component of the long take.

I must offer a final qualification: this theorisation of time in the long take does not (nor can) consider instances where extenuating circumstances affect a spectator’s attention. For example, if someone slips in and out of attention because they are too physically exhausted to stay awake. Or if someone’s film viewing experience is ill-matched to the stylistic or formal qualities of a particular film (i.e. someone who has only seen Hollywood films or music videos watching a slow paced art-house film). This theory assumes a ‘well-informed’ (and sufficiently conscious) viewer, and only accounts for what is happening formally and textually within the long take (pacing, rhythm, movement, etc.) that may produce extreme variances in the felt experience of time.

⁴¹ Ivone Margulies argues a similar point with Chantal Ackerman’s ‘corporeal cinema.’ Margulies notes that a central quality of corporeal cinema is that it makes the spectator aware of their own physical presence, their body. “In all her work real-time presentation engages the spectator’s awareness of his or her own physical presence” ([*Nothing happens: Chantal Akerman’s hyperrealist everyday*. (Durham: Duke University Press, c1996) 52]. The use of extended long takes is an important formal element in achieving this.

Formal-Textual Analysis at Work: The Trolley Journey Scene

As I have thus far pointedly observed, a ‘naked’ ASL reveals little of a film’s style, rhythm, or pacing, let alone meaning. Hence the external time figures 39”, 1’37”, 08”, 16”, and 1’02” next to the scene I am about to discuss tells us little about what to expect. As an example of my critical method put into practice, I will analyze the trolley scene from one of my three case study films, *Stalker*. In doing so I will concentrate on the formal-textual aspects of internal time which interact with and shape external time. *Stalker* uses a science fiction setting as backdrop for a parable on the futility of modern existence in face of moral and spiritual impoverishment. Beyond the decrepit confines of an unidentified Soviet city rests an area referred to as the Zone, where it is believed aliens once visited. Somewhere within the danger-ridden Zone is a room where one’s deep inner wishes are granted. The titular Stalker (Alexander Kaidanovsky) is a person who serves as a guide for people willing to risk their life to reach the wish fulfilling room. Two men, known simply as the Writer (Anatoly Solonitsyn) and the Scientist (Nikolai Grinko), have engaged the Stalker to lead them to this room. The trolley scene, which comes approximately 34 minutes into the film, represents their illegal “journey” from the city to the Zone.⁴² The sequence lasts 3’42”, yet the sense of time, the psychological time as it feels for the spectator (and, as we can only speculate, for the characters), is considerably longer.

⁴² The trolley ride also functions generically within the conventions of the science fiction film. In many science fiction films great financial and technological means are placed on the classic time-travel or journey episode that carries a protagonist (scientist, overreacher, hero, heroine) from earth to alien territory. Perhaps the archetypal example here is the time gate scene from *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), or the opening rocket crash scene in *The Planet of the Apes* (1968). Since Godard’s *Alphaville* (1965), many filmmakers have subverted this convention by de-emphasizing the “hard science” aspect of the journey. Tarkovsky did it earlier with the “driver-less” car drive scene in *Solaris* (1972). The decidedly non-technological, non-special effect trolley scene ride, which takes the three men from the natural world to the Zone’s magical unnatural world, can be seen as an anti-science fiction convention.

The following analysis will pinpoint the visual and aural elements that make the sequence's temporality feel elongated.

The sequence contains 5 shots, with the respective duration of 39" (shot 1), 1'37" (shot 2), 08" (shot 3), 16" (shot 4), and 1'02" (shot 5). This makes the ASL for the sequence, 44.4", a slow cutting rate by any standards. The scene begins with an abrupt straight cut from an extreme long shot of the men on the trolley moving out of an enclosed building area, to a close-up of the Writer on the trolley in mid-transit. The trolley is moving from screen right to left, with the Stalker, the Scientist, and the Writer positioned from left to right on the trolley. Firstly, the cut is abrupt because it covers a drastic change in shot scale from extreme long shot to close-up. Secondly, there is a stark change in sound from the loud, distant whirring of the trolley engine, to the near clanking sound of the wheels on the tracks. This abrupt cut foreshadows the unreadable temporal interval in-between each shot that is one of the factors that "elongates" the sequence's sense of time.

The camera is tracking alongside the trolley on a dolly platform parallel to the diegetic trolley. Hence even though the camera is constantly moving, we don't sense camera movement as much as movement in relation to passing backgrounds, as when riding on a train and looking out a window. The first shot of the sequence is the only shot that contains dialogue:

Writer: "Won't they [the military police] come after us?"

Stalker: "No, they're scared to death of it."

Writer: "Of what?"

The image, as it is throughout the scene, is taken with a telephoto lens that allows for several rack-focuses that renders a background/foreground spatial detachment. The camera pans left away from the Writer to the mist-filled log

embankments in the background. This cuts to the Scientist in close-up, and then pans slightly to the left to capture the Stalker in the front of the trolley anxiously looking ahead. We can still hear the diegetic sound of the wheels on the train tracks, but a non-diegetic sound is subtly introduced, an “unnatural” electronic sound, akin to the sound of bending sheet metal. The camera reframes right to the Scientist, who is facing away from the camera for much of the shot. The camera pans right away from the Scientist and rack focuses on the background. For the next 13 seconds the camera records an empty frame of steel objects and log embankments in a misty landscape. By the end of this shot there is an aural balance between the diegetic (wheels) and non-diegetic (electronic) sound.

The shot cuts to a close-up of the Writer, in profile with his head tilted downward, and then to the Stalker in close-up, standing upright looking steadfastly ahead (screen left). By this point the diegetic trolley track sound is overwhelmed by the non-diegetic electronic sound. Moreover, the diegetic sound of the trolley wheels begins to take on the properties of the electronic sound. The wheels no longer clank but appear muffled, distorted, and varied in pitch, much like the gyrating electronic sound. This aural merging of diegetic and non-diegetic sound plays a great formal role in elongating the perception of time. The bending sound pitch creates an aural equivalent of “stretched” time. The modulating, changing soundscape, real mixed with unreal, natural with unnatural, can also be said to look ahead to the very same shifting, unnatural time/space properties of the Zone (discussed in Chapter 9).

The final long take colours the whole scene’s temporal tonality by emphasizing stillness and inactivity. The Writer is framed in profile and positioned with his head bowed down. Throughout this shot the camera, while it moves ever so slightly, never veers from the Writer. He turns his head once and brings his hand up to

his face, but that is the extent of the action. Of the five, this shot has the least amount of ‘information’ for the viewer to digest, which underscores that there is little happening dramatically in the scene and little narrative advancement (‘slow’ temporal tonality). And yet, as this shot begins the Writer appears to be asleep, or at least in a semi-state of consciousness (when he raises his head the sluggish movement of his eyelids implies this), which suggests that the trolley journey has been considerably longer than the 2’40” of elapsed screen-time. The shot ends with a cut to a color image of a lush, wooded landscape. The change to color helps to increase the sense of geographical space covered (and hence effecting time estimation). The unnatural, non-diegetic sound abruptly stops and is replaced by a return to the diegetic sound of the wheels and tracks.

Although the trolley ride consumed only 3’42” of screen time there are subtle hints that there has been temporal compression. For example, in the second shot after the journey ends (shot 43), the Stalker rises and stretches his arms over his head, as if limbering up after a long trip (corroborating the Writer’s sleep-state in shot 41). An important factor that aids in rendering this sense of temporal elongation is the quality of abruptness. This occurs across the first cut, in the sound, and in the change to color. These abrupt changes subtly affect the temporal whole of the scene by giving the impression of a larger span of duration.

The unbridgeable temporal interval in-between shots, what Deleuze would call the irrational or incommensurable link, also helps render the trolley scene its sense of temporal vagueness. Straight cuts *usually* imply a temporal/spatial continuity, unless another element (sound, dialogue, etc.) suggests otherwise. But, outside of some very general factors such as constant daylight and unchanged clothing, there are no precise indices in this sequence to help us “read” how the temporal relation between shots

relates to the scene's temporal whole. Although time seems to have been 'lost' in-between the shots, the affective nature of the temporal elongation is felt within the long takes.

In the end we can surmise, given how slow the trolley is moving, that it would take considerably longer than 3'42" to travel from the city to the Zone, which we know to be in the countryside (not to imply, of course, that the film should have presented the journey in real time). We get the sense of having traveled further *narratively* than the screen time would suggest. Hence pure external time is affected, made to feel longer, by the qualities of internal time, all of which renders a durational complexity to the scene. As I will elaborate in Chapter 9, textually and philosophically, this temporal vagueness symbolizes the spiritual journey that the three travelers are about to embark upon, as well as foreshadowing the "unreal" time-space properties of the Zone.

Conclusion

Though external time is of obvious importance to determining, identifying, and understanding a long take, it is the less quantifiable aspects of internal time that colors and shapes the overall effect of the long take. The phenomena known as psychological time, where time is felt to be moving "quickly" or "slowly" also operates within the dynamics of the long take. In the sense that our level of *attentiveness* to on-screen activity, shaped by such factors as intensity and density of portrayed event, sense of teleology within movement, and narrative plenitude, condition the rate of a film's temporal flow, its 'temporal tonality'. Hence metric considerations *alone* (external time) can not define a long take, or fully render its 'experience of time'. These elements, which comprise a shot's "internal time,"

include movement (camera, frame, and character), the soundtrack (dialogue, music, sound effects), the overall *intensity* of narrative engagement, and the sense of change occurring within the frame (which encompasses pacing). The latter is especially important because “time is the dimension of change, a fact which distinguishes it from the three dimensions of space.”⁴³ Internal time, while harder to quantify than external time, is vitally important to an analysis that emphasizes temporality in all its shapes and hues. Hence both external and internal time -and how they interpenetrate- must be considered to properly analyze the long take in all its richness and complexity.

The interpenetration of a long take’s internal and external time gives shape to the emotional quality of time, or a shot’s temporal tonality. The central barometer for the broad fluctuations in temporal tonality is the *nature* and *content* of spectator engagement with the long take in question. The ‘nature’ of spectator engagement can alternate or fluctuate from intensive to contemplative, active to passive, rational to sensual, and continuous to intermittent. While the ‘content’ of the engagement encompasses story, plot and character development, with varied and kinetic action/events; to more abstract concerns such as mood, theme, and setting, with static or slowly varied action/events. These variances in nature and content of engagement demonstrate how an oscillation of temporal tonality is an integral artistic component of the long take. And one that has not been properly articulated or fully explored in the field of film studies.

The analysis of the trolley scene from *Stalker* served to demonstrate how my critical analysis will reveal the pertinent formal and textual aspects that determine the varied relationship between the long take and time. Of course each film/shot presents its own context, but the interpenetrating aspects affecting external and internal time

⁴³Ted Honderich, ed. *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 875.

which I deemed most important for the trolley scene were: use of diegetic and non-diegetic sound, acting, shot scale, camera movement, and editing. At this point, these (and other) formal factors necessary to an understanding of the long take's temporal and artistic possibilities can be collapsed into four categories:

1-kinetic energy (pace, stillness, amount and nature of movement, speed of actions in relation to our perception of them in reality and in other films [act-schemata vs. perceptual-schemata])

2-narrative pertinence (relationship between shot content and narrative progression/narrative thematic)

3-teleological drive (change, the *sense* of movement, direction)

4-temporal tonality (the overall emotional quality of time artistically designed to affect a spectator's experience of time)

Chapter 4. The Long Take and Structural Aspects of Narrative Time

- Introduction
- Automorphic Representations of Time
 - Classical versus Emblematic Automorphic Time*
- Homomorphic Representations of Time
 - Mise-en-Trickery*
- The Symbiotic Long Take
- ‘Soft’ Formal-Thematic Determinism
- Conclusion

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION

My goal in this chapter is to chart a taxonomy of the different ways in which the long take articulates narrative time. Since this is not a thesis on narratology, I will not engage the subtle and varied particularities of narrative theory. For my purposes, “narrative” is understood as a series of related events experienced and motivated by a set of characters (or character) occurring in a chronological order. This meaning aligns with a set of terms used by the Russian Formalists in analyzing narrative structure, *fabula* and *syuzhet*, usually translated to story and plot. These terms have been used, expanded, and modified by countless narratologists.¹ As Seymour Chatman writes, “the ‘fable’ (*fabula*), or basic story stuff, [is] the total of events to be related in the narrative, and, conversely, the ‘plot’ (*sjuzet*), [is] the story as actually told by linking the events together.”² For example, in *The Magnificent Ambersons* we are told that George and his mother Isabel go on a trip to Europe. We do not see this, nor does the event itself consume any screen-time, but it is part of the *fabula*. The selection of the *fabula* elements, their chronological ordering, and how they are

¹ For an excellent discussion of these terms from a narratological point of view I refer the reader to David Bordwell's “Principles of Narration,” in *Narration in Fiction Film* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 49-62.

² *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1978), 19-20.

stylistically or formally represented in the narrative is the syuzhet.³

Before I begin I should stress that my taxonomy, while attempting to be exhaustive, is of existing cases and not hypothetical instances of long take and narrative time. A second caveat: with my three case studies the methodological approach presupposes a certain determinism between the analysis and the critical findings by arguing for a strong interrelation between use of the long take, time, and meaning (form and content). This will not be exclusively the case in this chapter, since in some categories it is not necessary that the shot be a long take for the point to hold. Rather, my goal is to present a general overview of how the long take *has been used* to represent and advance narrative time (although I will argue a form of determinism in some cases).⁴

I will begin my taxonomy with a theoretical introduction that will reveal how even the most common species of long take, that in which the screen-time aligns with the narrative time, disguises subtle layers of complexity. In his philosophical approach to film, *Image and Mind: Film, Philosophy and Cognitive Science*, Gregory Currie discusses the nature of cinema temporality within the context of the

³ For matters of convenience and not polemics, I am collapsing style into syuzhet, in contrast to Bordwell, who in the text noted in footnote 1 keeps style separate from syuzhet. For Bordwell style, understood as that which “names the film’s systematic use of cinematic devices,” is its own system that works alongside the syuzhet. In short, in Bordwell’s narratology, syuzhet encompasses the dramaturgy of the fiction film (for example, the order, duration or frequency of a particular event), and style the systematic use of film technique (camera movement, lighting, editing, sound, etc.). Hence, as Bordwell explains, the syuzhet may make it necessary that the audience realize two events as occurring at the same time. But the range of expressing this cinematically belongs to the realm of style (i.e. by crosscutting, split screen, by depth of field, by voice-over, etc.). However, not every theorist makes this distinction. With certain theorists, the definition of syuzhet incorporates stylistic choice. For example, “In the syuzhet, the basic armature of fabula events is refashioned into an aesthetically satisfying form through the use of artistic devices such as *in medias res* construction, retardation, parallel plots, ellipsis, and others.” *New Vocabularies in Film Semiotics*, ed. Robert Stam, Robert Burgoyne, Sandy Flitterman-Lewis. (London: Routledge, 1992), 71. In any case, my own understanding of narrative owes much to Bordwell’s: “...narrative is *the process whereby the film’s syuzhet and style interact in the course of cueing and channeling the spectator’s construction of the fabula.*” *Narration in Fiction Film* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), p. 53.

⁴ This lack of a determinism comes partly from the fact that this chapter will be more descriptive and analytical rather than interpretive. Hence there will be less discussion of textual meaning here than in the case study chapters.

representation of time across all the arts. Although many arts can make their respective claim to being a temporal art, Currie believes that cinema is unique in its ability to represent time by means of time:

What is distinctively temporal about film is not its portrayal of time, but the manner of its portrayal: its portrayal of time by means of time passing.⁵

Currie explains this position by borrowing an idea from Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*: "...when two expressions refer to different objects, we can represent a relation between the objects by means of a relation between the expressions."⁶ Currie offers the following as an example. Let us say we want to express that "Fred is red", and we do this by writing "Fred" in green ink to represent "Fred as red". The green ink color represents "Fred as red". We could also have arranged it so that the expression's being written in red ink represents "Fred as red". This latter would be what Currie calls an automorphic representation: "the representation's having property *P* represents the thing represented having property *P*." Automorphic representation is a special case of what Currie calls *homomorphic* representation, "where a property of some kind represents a property of that same kind."⁷ Both the red and green ink are examples of homomorphic representation, since in both cases a color represents a color; but only the red ink is an automorphic representation, since the color red is being used to represent "Fred as red." In cinema, then, the form of all temporal elements are represented, formally, by temporal representation (time passing).

⁵Gregory Currie, *Image and Mind: Film, Philosophy and Cognitive Science*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 96.

⁶ *ibid.*, 97.

⁷ *ibid.*

Automorphic Representations of Time

I will now turn this theoretical interjection around to this chapter's concern: the relationship between narrative time and the long take. According to Currie, there can be either an identical relation of screen-time to narrative-time (automorphic), or an unequal relation, where the screen time does not match the narrative time (homomorphic):

Film's representation of time by time can be automorphic or merely homomorphic. The represented fight lasts five minutes, and its lasting that long is represented by the relevant representation onscreen lasting just that long. It is the default setting for cinematic interpretation that the representation of duration in cinema is automorphic; it is the assumption we start with, and from which we move only when some aspect of the narration, some clash with real-world belief or some combination of the two suggests we should.⁸

To further Currie's terms, automorphic representations of time are usually represented cinematically through continuity editing. For example, the Dinner Scene (scene 14) in *The Magnificent Ambersons* lasts 4'02" of screen time and is composed of 24 shots that fragment the space according to the dynamics of the dialogue and reactions of the principals involved, Eugene, George, the Major, and Uncle Jack. Even with the many edits that 'fragment' the space, the representation of time in the scene is automorphic, meaning that the 4'02" of screen time represents 4'02" of narrative time. There are no temporal gaps, compressions, or discontinuities between the 24 shots that compose the scene. However, there is a far higher percentage of automorphic representation of time in long takes than across edited pieces of film.⁹ Or

⁸ *ibid.*, 99.

⁹ Granting the agency of cinematic problem solving and industry production history, this must be because editing is better suited to representing the temporal and spatial contractions and extensions necessary to narrative filmmaking.

phrased differently, editing is used far more often to *achieve* an homomorphic representation of time than the long take.¹⁰ The first general point, then, is that in the majority of instances where a long take is used, there is an automorphic representation of time. But what will be exemplified in my case studies is that, because of this, instances when an homomorphic representation of time occurs in a long take, being rarer, can be used to unusual and striking dramatic effect.

It is not Currie's intention to flesh out the potential implications and meanings of the terms automorphic and homomorphic representation of time; nor does he accord any attention to the long take. Hence I will need to augment Currie's terms to make them more useful for a study of the long take and to better account for the complexities of narrative time in the long take. Alongside automorphic and homomorphic representations of time I will distinguish between *continuous* and *discontinuous* time in a long take.¹¹ These two terms add theoretical flexibility by enabling me to distinguish between different forms of temporal anomaly in a long take; namely, temporal anomaly inscribed in the diegesis, and temporal anomaly inscribed in technique and form. These distinctions will become apparent as I provide examples, but in the majority of cases, automorphic time is continuous, uninterrupted, or non-fragmented. And homomorphic time is discontinuous, interrupted or fragmented.

One more point needs to be made to clarify how Currie's automorphic representation of time relates to film narrative and the long take. In cases of an incompatibility between a narrative's clock and clock-time, what determines

¹⁰ This is born out by *The Magnificent Ambersons*. Of the 23 scenes that are composed of two or more shots, 9 are homomorphic (scenes 1 through 5, 8, 11, 25, and 35). In contrast, of the 15 scenes that are composed of a single long take, not one represents homomorphic time.

¹¹ I am referring here to how time operates in the narrative and how it is represented technically, since time is arguably continuous in nature.

automorphic time is narrative agency. Hence if a character says that a bomb will go off in 30 seconds, and the explosion occurs a few seconds before or after in terms of clock time, we still assume this to be automorphic time. In other words, the character's watch takes precedence over the spectator's watch. A second generalisation is that in the majority of cases where a long takes expresses a temporal anomaly, it does so in a noticeable manner. For example, temporal irregularity is often clearly demarcated through mise-en-scène (change in light, costume, and sound) or through voice-over dialogue. However, I will demonstrate that the range of creative expression in the long take makes the above points concerning automorphic/continuous and homomorphic/discontinuous, guidelines rather than rigid rules. With this in place I can now begin to chart a taxonomy of the different ways in which narrative time has been expressed in a long take.

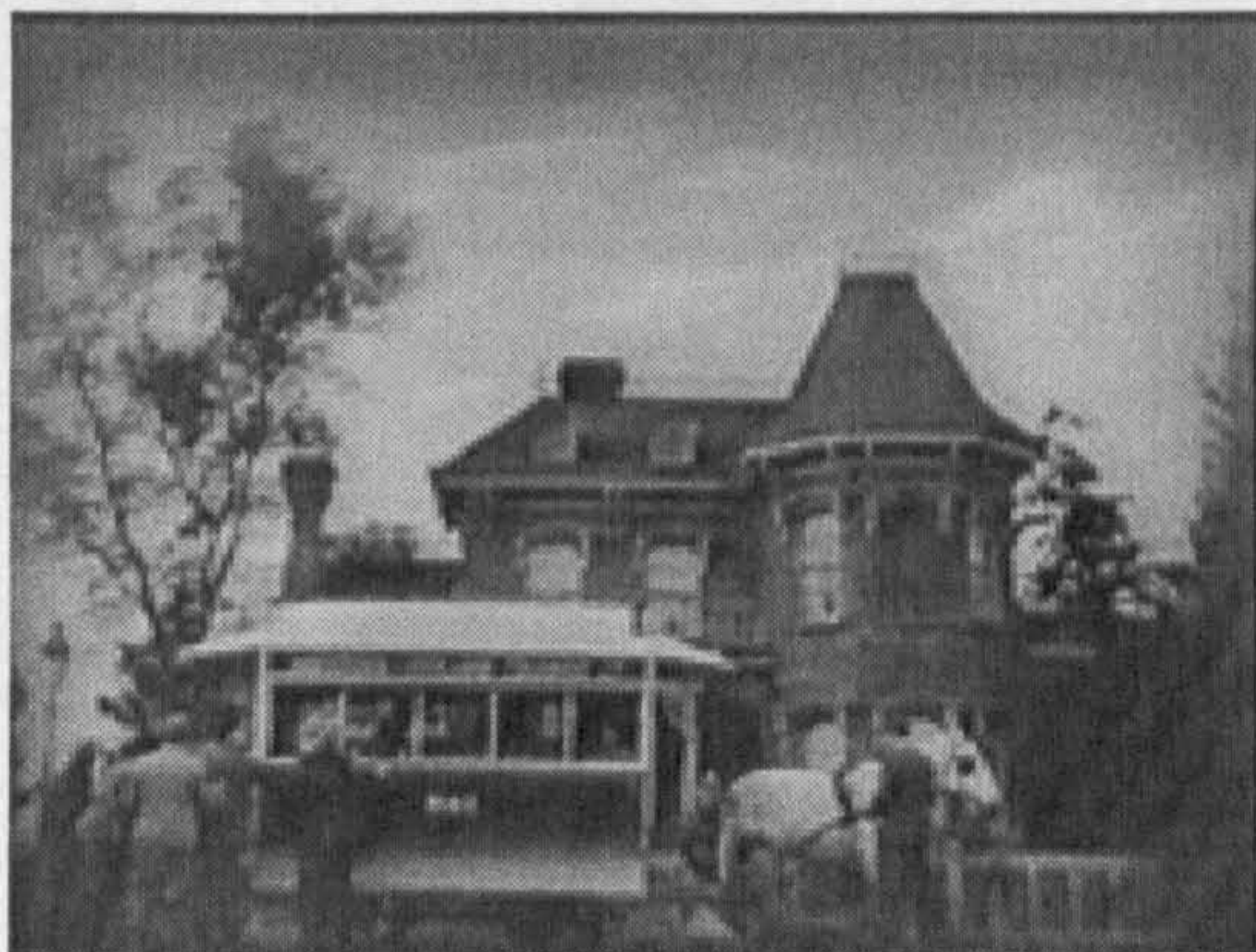
Classical versus Emblematic Automorphic Time

I will begin my taxonomy by addressing the point raised in the beginning of this chapter concerning the possible complexities within even the most common species of long take, that in which the screen-time aligns with the narrative time it represents (the “default setting” of cinema). The long take is often aligned with this default setting. Take as an example the second shot of “The Ball” scene in *The Magnificent Ambersons*, a 29” long take of a slow dolly forward through a bustling crowd of party guests toward the Major, Isabel, and George at the greeting line, soon joined by Eugene. We can say with certainty that this shot represents 29” of continuous narrative time, therefore rendering an automorphic representation of time. Although this is the most common form of represented narrative time in a long take,

the exceptions to this will form the crux of my taxonomy. In some cases these exceptions are clearly articulated, but in some cases they are not. Three long takes early in *The Magnificent Ambersons* will serve to demonstrate how subtle and elusive such a strict correlation between screen-time and automorphic time can be.

The second scene in *The Magnificent Ambersons* presents a montage of events centering on the young Eugene's failed attempts at courting Isabel. The scene sets itself up as taking place sometime in the past, with the exact length of narrative time traversed indeterminate. The scene ends with a static 52" long take of a group of gossiping women at the dressmakers. It is all too easy to align this with an automorphic representation of time. But given how indeterminate and playful Welles has been with time in this scene, can we so easily assume that this long take, with its static, low angle framing and mannered acting, represents precisely 52" of narrative time?

There are two other long takes in the opening scenes of *The Magnificent*



Emblematic Automorphic Time, shot 1



shot 61

Ambersons which pose a similar problem: the opening shot of the film and shot 61. In shot 61 (46"), young George is being 'reprimanded' by his mother and grandfather for having fought with a neighborhood boy. George is posed standing in the foreground, with his grandfather, mother, and father seated behind him and a rear projection (intentionally obvious) of the Ambersons estate in the background. The

opening shot begins in black, with Welles' melodious voice-over, and then fades into a long shot street view of a house in the background, with a horse-drawn public tramcar entering screen left into the middle ground to stop for passenger pickup. The contours of the frame retain a blurred semi-iris effect. Victor Perkins writes of this scene, "While the mood is one of empathy with *those days* rather than with *nowadays*, there is a distance and tension between the narration and the image. This is brought about by agitating the friction between the generality of the spoken account and the particularity of the image."¹² For the same reason, there is an ambiguity as to the precise linkage between the external time of the long take (46"), and the amount of narrative time this is meant to represent.

From the point of view of narrative explication, these long takes, with their static framing and mannered 'photo album' composition, represent a "typicality" rather than a specific unfolding narrative moment. They stand in for a 'bygone era,' one that will soon be eclipsed by the inevitable march of progress, represented by Eugene and the automobile. Within the context of *The Magnificent Ambersons*, these three long takes (shots 1, 34, 61) "take their place as illustrative sketches within the overall pattern of montage."¹³ It is difficult to state conclusively that these shots, especially 1 and 61, represent automorphic time. Structurally, and to some extent formally, they are reminiscent of a type of shot in early cinema that would appear at either the opening or beginning of a film to signal an introduction or closure to the story, but that remained outside the diegesis. Noël Burch referred to these as "emblematic" shots (the close-up shot of Broncho Billy Anderson firing his pistol at the camera from *The Great Train Robbery* [1903, Edwin Porter] is an example).¹⁴ As

¹² V.F. Perkins, *The Magnificent Ambersons*. (London: British Film Institute, 1999), 25-26.

¹³ Ibid, p. 54. There is a third such shot (33), of Uncle Jack at the barber's, but which is not a long take.

¹⁴ Noël Burch, "A Primitive Mode of Representation," *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser. (London: British Film Institute, 1992), p. 223.

a nod to this similarity, I will refer to this category of long take and narrative time as *emblematic automorphic time*: a time which runs continuously *without any apparent temporal anomaly* but which, through form and/or style (tension between image and sound, composition, framing, etc.) represents a larger, if somewhat vague, block of fabula –an era or a period. Up to this point we have outlined two categories of long take and narrative time relationship:

- 1) the classic automorphic time (the “default setting”); and
- 2) the emblematic automorphic time

Homomorphic Representations of Time

I will proceed with a categorical listing of ways in which homomorphic time has been represented in a long take. As a generalisation, one can say that the more obvious the temporal anomaly, the clearer it is that homomorphic time is being represented. For example, a freeze frame at the end of a shot running normal speed is an obvious temporal anomaly because it is immediately felt as a shift or change in the flow of narrative time. Hence the duration of the classical freeze frame does not have the same narrative durational value as the previous time of the shot. With the freeze frame the continuous flow of automorphic time is replaced by a continuity of a different order. The freeze frame, especially when it occurs at the end of a film, which is often the case,¹⁵ introduces a timelessness or sense of non-closure (often as a poetic

¹⁵ Such as *400 Blows* (1959, François Truffaut), *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (1969, Arthur Penn), *The Other* (1972, Robert Mulligan), *1900* (1977, Bernardo Bertolucci), *Thelma and Louise* (1991, Ridley Scott), or *La Nuit de Varennes* (1982, Ettore Scola).

treatment of death). As Torben Grodal writes,

A space in which no changes take place will be experienced as 'timeless', just as time-space is transformed into a purely timeless space when moving pictures are frozen into a still.¹⁶

Hence the time being represented, whether it is 'timelessness' or eternity, can not be equated with the length of its passing on screen (the external time). I will refer to this as *continuous homomorphic time*: where time from the technical standpoint of an uninterrupted strip of film (either optically achieved or as a still photograph) is continuous, but the narrative time being represented does not align with the external time. The difference here from *emblematic automorphic time* is that in this case *there is* an apparent temporal anomaly.¹⁷

Another obvious temporal anomaly is fast/slow motion and frame by frame, pixilated cinematography (a flower blossoming over the course of a few seconds is a common example of the latter technique). Since the relationship between this cinematographic effect and narrative time is self-evident, I will not provide any examples. Instead I will introduce into this category of homomorphic time a recent cinematographic innovation that is a combination of slow motion and frame by frame

¹⁶ Torben Grodal, *Moving Pictures: A New Theory of Film Genres, Feelings, and Cognition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 150.

¹⁷ An occurrence of a long take freeze frame unusually effecting narrative time comes early in Frank Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life* (1948). After a few minutes of a montage sequence of Bailey's childhood being recounted by God for the sake of Bailey's appointed guardian Angel Clarence, we cut to a medium shot of a young man (Jimmy Stewart) in a luggage store. The man spreads his arms wide to demonstrate the size of the luggage he needs, and then the image comes to an abrupt freeze frame. The celestial voice overs heard at the beginning of the film return, with Clarence inquiring why the image was stopped. The long take (27") freeze frame suspends time in three senses: 1) the narrative time of the telling of George Bailey's life; 2) time as it is expressed and experienced as movement and change; and 3) importantly for the film's thematic, human time. While on the one hand the freeze frame is almost Brechtian in its abrupt suspension of movement, the stillness is quickly and cleverly re-inscribed into the film's narrative and theme. A similar freeze frame occurs in *All About Eve* (1950, Joseph Mankiewicz), at the moment when Eve (Anne Baxter) is about to receive a theatrical award. While this narrative moment is placed on hold, we hear the voice-over of a cynical theatre critic (George Sanders) tell us about the sinister backdrop to the event and introduces other characters at the ceremonial event.

technique, and a late 19th century form of multi-camera set-up associated with Eadweard Muybridge's serial photography: the 'virtual' camera.¹⁸ With the virtual camera, the image can simultaneously represent different speeds and movements. For example, a subject can be caught frozen in mid-air, while the camera dollies around the subject. This new technology was first seen in television commercials before being adapted to narrative cinema. This effect was popularized by *Matrix* (1999, the Wachowski brothers) and coined by its filmmakers 'bullet time' because of the way the effect was used to depict Neo's (Keanu Reeves) ability to move fast enough to dodge bullets. In the recent film *Swordfish* (2001, Dominic Sena), the virtual camera effect is used for the first time to depict an action occurring in separate locations. The unique homomorphic temporal moment comes during the film's opening scene. A criminal gang led by anti-terrorist vigilante Gabriel Shears (John Travolta) holds thirty people wrapped in powerful explosives hostage in a bank. Confusion ensues and one of the explosives is detonated. The split second aftermath of the explosion is depicted with a virtual camera that moves screen left to right passing through a ripped open police car, the wall of a coffee shop, and S.W.A.T. officers thrown into the air by the force of the explosion. One and-a-half seconds of narrative time is expanded to fill 30" of screen-time.¹⁹

¹⁸ There are as many names as there are inventors of this technology. The basic setup is a combination of horizontally aligned still cameras, sometimes as many as 150, that are programmed to click at separate intervals according to the movement of the subject(s). These still images are then digitally composited with a traditional dolly shot of the same action. The earliest version of this camera was Tim Macmillan's 'time-slice' camera in 1980. Michel Gondry revolutionized the technique in music videos ("Like a Rolling Stone" in 1995) and the The Gap Khakis campaign and Smirnoff Vodka commercials. John Gaeta, the visual effects supervisor of *Matrix*, refers to his version as "Flow-Mo." Some French writers have appropriated the term used in reference to 1960's films of Michelangelo Antonioni, 'temps mort.' For a discussion of this see the following online article: Joe Fordham, "Tim Macmillan's Time-Slice Films," February 04, 2000 [essay online] available from <http://www.vfxpro.com/article/mainv/0,7220,106346,00.html>

¹⁹ The 1 ½ seconds is taken from an interview with the cinematographer: "Our objective was to turn our shot into much more of a traditional dolly move, except that the camera would theoretically have to travel at about [300 mph] to cover our move...to capture the 1 ½-second event and spread it over 30 seconds of screen time." Christopher Probst, "The Frozen Moment," *American Cinematographer* vol. 82, no. 3 (March 2001): 49.

Mise-en-Trickery

I will now provide textual examples of the most common type of homomorphic time in the long take: temporal anomaly that occurs through a manipulation of mise-en-scène (lighting, character blocking, set design, and art direction). I will refer to this category of homomorphic long take as *mise-en-trickery*. One of the most common varieties of mise-en-trickery involves time compression achieved through an expressively manipulated light change. An example comes near the end of *La Symphonie Pastorale* (1946, Jean Delannoy), in a long take that runs from 98'58" to 99'40". The shot begins with Pastor Martin (Pierre Blanchard) entering a room. The camera pans right as he walks past his sleeping wife and sits down to rest his head on the kitchen table. Over the next several seconds the light in the room noticeably darkens. A few seconds later on the wall behind the Pastor, we see the shadow of window shutters being opened to daylight, and then the silhouette of a woman. We hear the sound of a door closing. The Pastor wakes up and looks in the direction of the sound. He stands up and then the shot cuts to his wife at the window. There are numerous examples of this type of homomorphic time long take where the passage from night to day (or day to night) is signaled by a change in lighting.²⁰

Aspects of mise-en-scène other than or alongside lighting have also been manipulated to achieve homomorphic time in a long take. A simple yet effective example comes from *La Vita é Bella* (1998, Roberto Benigni). The scene takes place

²⁰ For example in Yasujiro Ozu's *The Only Son* (1936). David Bordwell describes the homomorphic time long take as follows: "Here a shot which consumes less than 90 seconds of screen time moves the fabula from a moment around 10 p.m. to dawn." *Narration in Fiction Film* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 82.

in a courtyard, with bookseller/waiter Guido Orefice (Roberto Benigni) picking the lock on his front door, while in the background the woman he is courting, Dora (Nicoletta Braschi), walks up a short flight of stairs leading to a narrow, floral entrance way. Guido is dressed in a black and white waiters frock, and Dora in an elegant, pink evening dress. In long shot, we see Dora turn and disappear screen left. The long take (48'03"-48'56") begins from behind Guido's shoulder and cranes to follow him walk up the stairs in search of Dora. Guido turns screen left out of camera view. The camera remains static for 5" on an empty frame; the light brightens slightly, the sound of chirping morning birds is heard, and then the off-screen voice of Dora calling out the name, "Joshua." A little boy runs into camera view. Guido's off-screen voice bellows: "Let's go, you're going to make Mommy late." The camera reveals Dora, now dressed in a casual blue dress, embracing her son screen right, and Guido screen left wearing a grey suit. Within the continuous long take time of 53" the narrative has advanced some 3-4 years, compressing the couple's marriage and the subsequent birth and first years of their son Joshua.

The next sampling of mise-en-trickery homomorphic long takes have an additional aspect in common: a textual interest in history. I note this because over the course of my research I discovered that a high proportion of homomorphic long takes occur in historical films (or films dealing thematically or philosophically with history). Hence they will be treated together as a sub-division of the mise-en-trickery category. I will begin my sample with *La Nuit de Varennes* (1982, Ettore Scola), a period piece set during the French Revolution. The film's concluding 4'00" long take contains homomorphic time through a brazen manipulation of mise-en-scène. The shot begins with a Venetian slide lecturer advertising his latest magic lantern show. His words foreshadow the shot's time shift: "In this magic box I'll show you a New

World, with distance and perspective.” A voice-over begins: “In 1792, Restif de la Bretonne wrote these words in chapter 17 of the ‘Revolutionary Nights’: ‘All those ideas exhausted me. For relief I plunged into the centuries that followed. I saw the people of 1992 reading our history....’” The camera pans right to capture Nicolas Edme Restif (Jean-Louis Barrault) walking up a flight of stairs leading up from the Seine River embankment. He stops halfway up the landing to glance back at the embankment, and then continues up the stairs. The camera cranes up diagonally as he rises to street level, only to reveal modern day Paris. Through the duration of the shot we have moved ahead narratively 200 years, from the time of the writing of ‘Revolutionary Nights’ (1792) to the future period the story refers to (1992).²¹

Ettore Scola employs a similar homomorphic time as a narrational and structuring principle in *La Famiglia* (1987). *La Famiglia* recounts a journey across several generations of an Italian family, told from the present day point of view of the film’s narrator Carlo (Vittorio Gassman). The film begins in 1907 on the day of the narrator’s baptism, with family and friends gathered for a group photo, and then moves ahead elliptically, ending on a similar scene of a group photo celebrating the narrator’s eightieth birthday. The ensuing generations of this upper class Italian family mirror the social and political upheavals of modern Italy, but the film does this without ever leaving the interior of the family home. All the ellipses are achieved through eight homomorphic long takes that dolly forward along the home’s main corridor.²² In each case, when the camera arrives at the end of its movement, the narrative has moved forward approximately ten years. In some cases the temporal

²¹ Restif walks off into the middle of a modern day throng, and then the image holds as a freeze frame for the length of the end credits (60”).

²² The eight homomorphic long takes occur at the following screen-times: 6’35”-7’24” (49”), 16’20”-16’45” (25”), 34’42”-35’20” (38”), 46’22”-46’52” (30”), 62’57”-66’14” (3’17”), 87’00”-87’42” (42”), 103’55”-104’56” (1’01”), and 114’09”-114’35” (26”).

ellipsis is aided by key offscreen sounds that signal a shift in time (radio announcements, music, narrator's voice-over, etc.).

Two other films dealing with Italian history which employ creative mise-en-trickery are Bernardo Bertolucci's *1900* (1977) and *The Spider's Stratagem* (1969) [to be dealt with later]. In *1900*, Bertolucci orchestrates an ellipsis of approximately eight years (1900 to 1908) with a long take tracking shot of 2'22." The shot begins with the twin patriarchs, 'padrone' Alfredo Berlinghieri (Burt Lancaster) and peasant Leo Dalco (Sterling Hayden), announcing the birth of their respective grandson's Alfredo and Olmo. The camera tracks past a row of workers tilling the land with scythes, tilts up to the sky, and then tilts back down 10" later to a single horse-drawn mechanical thresher working the same land. The elder peasant statesman, Dalco, voices his displeasure at the modern tool. The camera then tracks right to follow a group of children playing in the fields, one of the boys being Alfredo's young grandson.²³

In *Ulysses' Gaze* (1995, Theo Angelopoulos), the film's central character is a Greek-born American director named "A" (Harvey Keitel), whose quest to find three lost film reels by the fictitious Manakia brothers becomes the impetus for the film's frequent homomorphic long take journeys through Greek and Balkan history. The film introduces what Andrew Horton refers to as Angelopoulos' "time-destroying" technique²⁴ in the film's first post-credit scene. The long take opens with a black and white view of the ocean. The camera dollies back slowly to capture an old man, one of the Manakia brothers, standing at the shore operating a hand-cranked camera. A voice-over begins: "It was the winter of 1954...." The camera dollies back to reveal the source of the voice, a man standing behind the old filmmaker. The old filmmaker

²³ If ever there was a shot that represented Bertolucci's famous paraphrase of Rossellini's statement about every camera movement making a moral statement, this would be it.

²⁴ Andrew Horton, *The Films of Theo Angelopoulos: A Cinema of Contemplation* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 185.

hunches over from a heart attack and collapses onto a chair. The camera tracks right and picks up a third man standing offscreen right, “A”. In the process of the shot’s 2’51” we advance temporally 41 years from 1954 to 1995.

In another series of “time-destroying” homomorphic long takes, “A” interacts with his politically tumultuous childhood years, while remaining an adult ‘in the present.’ The scene begins in the narrative present (1995), with “A” on a train destined for Bucharest. When the train comes to a stop we see soldiers in WW2 regalia walking on the platform. “A” meets and interacts with a woman much younger than he as his mother. Again, within continuous screen-time (2’39”) the narrative setting shifts some forty years, from 1995 to 1945. The young mother brings his “son” home to spend the evening with his family for a New Year’s Eve 1945 celebration. This leads to the film’s most famous set-piece, a long take of a staggering 11’11” that begins with “A” moving through the house greeting his grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and, finally, his father. Over the course of the scene, the festive mood is interrupted twice by the intrusion of fedora-capped government officials. On two occasions a character signals a time shift when saluting the New Year as they are being taken away by the officials (first the uncle, “Happy 1948,” and later the father, “Happy New Year. Happy 1950”). At the end of the scene, everyone comes together in the main room to pose for a photo. We hear the offscreen voice of “A” (Harvey Keitel’s voice): “I’m coming mother.” But this time, rather than Keitel, a young boy runs into the frame to join the group. In this wonderfully choreographed long take, the

two time shifts are announced simply through dialogue and subtle costume changes.²⁵

Another distinction of note among the category of mise-en-trickery long take is when the homomorphic shift initiates a flashback or flashforward. Examples of this occur in *Lone Star* (John Sayles, 1996) and *The Passenger* (1975, Michelangelo Antonioni).²⁶ *Lone Star* recounts sheriff Sam Deeds' (Chris Cooper) attempt to unravel the fact from fiction concerning his legendary father, sheriff Buddy Deeds (Matthew McConaughey). Camera movement and long take initiates each of the four narrative shifts from the present to the past. In the first time-shift Sam Deeds is standing behind two older men seated at a table in a bar. One of the seated men begins to reminisce about the time young deputy Buddy Deeds stood his ground against the mean, racist sheriff Charlie Wade (Kris Kristofferson). The camera begins to dolly into the storyteller and tilts down to his hands as he remembers, "It started over a basket of tortillas." The camera pans right across the red tablecloth to a close-up of a basket of tortillas. A hand enters frame right, and removes a ten-dollar bill out from under the top tortilla. The camera continues to pan right and tilts up to reveal Charlie

²⁵ This long take is an optimum moment to at least bring up an aspect of time and the long take which is beyond the parameters of my thesis, but important nonetheless: timing. Most long takes that feature camera movement and multiple actors require a considerable amount of rehearsal, co-ordination, and 'timing' with regards actors hitting their marks, the dolly grips negotiating between the lights and set construction, the focus puller, and the presence of the boom mike (to name only some of the aspects). This long take involves nearly every conceivable variable with regards timing: complex camera choreography (mise-en-scène in tandem with camera movement), multiple characters, and subtle costume and set changes. Plus, the timing must be maintained for an amazing 11'11". It is an exemplary model of long take 'timing'.

²⁶ *Distant Voice, Still Lives* (1988, Terence Davies) contains two 'flashback' symbiotic homomorphic long takes. At 12'29" the camera tracks laterally screen left back in time from a daughter crying over her father's death to happier Christmas's shared with the father and family. The first memory image captures the family sharing prayer rituals. At 1'45" the camera moves past a dark space, which conceals a transition that leads to a fade in on a front window bearing a wreath. The camera continues to track laterally along the outside fence of the house for another 50", ending on a long shot of the father putting up the Christmas tree. The narrative time represented within these two long takes covers shortly after the death of the father, and then moves back in time to earlier Christmas'. I have unfortunately not seen this film, but according to the following description, Erik Charell's *Caravan* (1934) very likely also includes homomorphic time long takes with flashbacks: "The film's average shot length lasts thirty-seven seconds, and Charell uses camera movement to shift in and out of flashbacks within a single shot." (David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, "Technological Change and Classical Film Style," in *History of American Cinema, Vol. 5*, ed., Tino Balio (Berkeley and Los Angeles California: University of California Press, 1993), p. 126.

Wade. In a continuous take of 46", in the same space (same table, same bar, same red tablecloth), the narrative has shifted from storytelling present (1996) to the story past (1957). We return back to the present in a similar homomorphic long take.²⁷

In *The Passenger*, Jack Nicholson plays a reporter (David Locke) who changes his identity for that of a dead British man named David Robertson (Chuck Mulvehill), whose corpse he finds in an adjoining hotel room. The scene in question begins with Locke seated shirtless at a small table switching passport photos. We hear an offscreen knock and the voice of a man inviting himself into Locke's room. The voice is Robertson's, and a conversation ensues between him and Locke. At this point we assume this to be Locke's subjective voice-over. The homomorphic long take begins with a medium shot of a tape recorder placed on a chair. The camera pans right to the back of Locke seated at the chair. Locke looks screen left and nods his head, as if acknowledging someone in the room. The camera pans in the same direction to a large open window overlooking a veranda. Robertson enters the frame on the veranda, followed by Locke, now wearing a plaid shirt. A cut follows them walking back into the room, with Locke walking off-screen while Robertson continues speaking. The camera then pans right back to Locke seated at the table as before, shirtless. In two consecutive long takes of 1'21" and 47" the temporality has shifted from present to past and back to the present.

Based on my extensive field study, I can conclude that an interest in historical discourse is the only generic/thematic pattern among the homomorphic long take category. The other mise-en-trickery homomorphic long takes can be more loosely defined by the structural function of advancing the narrative ahead (or back) in time.

²⁷ There are three other moments in *Lone Star* where the camera tilts, pans or reframes to trigger a temporal shift from the present to the past and then back again. On two of these occasions subtle lighting changes combine with the camera movement to trigger the temporal-narrative change.

Although more subtle distinctions can be made within some of the latter category, these are often dependent on questions of style, technique, or specific filmic contexts. The main taxonomical distinction I want to make, then, is of a more general variety. In one grouping the function of the homomorphic time in the long take is a narrational device to advance (or in some cases turn back) the narrative. In the other films the function of the shift in time is not so much a device to progress the narrative (which it also of course does), as to construct an historical trope by calling attention to the process of history (progress, class, cause and effect, etc.). Because of this single, strong generic determinant, I will make a distinction within the category of mise-en-trickery:

- a) Historical Narration (*La Nuit de Varennes*, *La Famiglia*, *The Spider's Stratagem*, 1900, *Ulysses' Gaze*); and
- b) Authorial Narration (*La Symphonie Pastorale*, *La Vita é Bella*, *La Famiglia*, *Lone Star*, *The Passenger*, *Distant Voices*, *Still Lives*)

The Symbiotic Long Take

A special case of long take and automorphic time is offered in long takes that cleverly camouflage a technical discontinuity in time by lap dissolves or hidden cuts. These come in two general varieties. An example of the first variety comes 33 minutes into *Mother and Son* (1997, Alexander Sokurov). The shot in question features the titular son taking his dying mother out for a walk. The mother, too weak, is carried in her son's loving arms. The son stops to the side of the road to rest, or perhaps observe the tumultuous sky (intermittent thunder is heard). He is in extreme long shot on the lower left quadrant of the frame, kneeling at the side of dirt road,

with his mother across his arms. The overcast sky suddenly brightens as a hazy sun bursts through the clouds. The son rises and continues his slow walk to medium shot range, and then the shot cuts. It appears as if all of this has occurred in one take, but if one looks attentively at the son and mother when they are resting by the side of the road, you will notice a very slight shift in their position that reveals a dissolve.²⁸ The mise-en-scène of the shot leads me to conclude that Sokurov's intention was to render the illusion of changing sunlight in continuous time. For example, the placing of the two humans at the edge of the frame in extreme long shot minimizes their importance and directs our attention to the static landscape, where it is much harder to detect the dissolve.

In my mind, the greatest example of this type of hidden edit occurs in the famous penultimate long take of *The Sacrifice* (1986, Andrei Tarkovsky). In this six minute shot, the camera tracks laterally left and right at a distance from the action, which consists of the central character, Alexander (Erland Josephson), running around eluding friends and family, while the summer house he has set afire burns to the ground in the background. The elusive edit occurs near the end of the long take, when Alexander's wife Adelaide (Susan Fleetwood), in mid-frame at extreme long shot, sits on the ground facing the burning house. Her family and friends enter the frame right to console her. At 2.17'13" the burning house crumbles to the ground and the shot cuts. However, if you concentrate on the house you will notice a very subtle dissolve at 2.16'55",²⁹ from the house in full flames to the house with its charred wood frame visible. The dissolve masks a temporal ellipsis in the real time it took for the house to burn down, enabling it to collapse 'on cue.' In both these examples, we have a case of

²⁸ This observation was made by a student, Aaron Mercer, during a presentation of the film in my seminar Time, Temporality, and Cinema (Concordia University, Winter 2001).

²⁹ The time is taken from the DVD version.

automorphic time achieved through a *discontinuous* technical time hidden by a slow lap dissolve.

The second variety of such 'mutated' long takes are those where a cut is hidden within the mise-en-scène. One example is the much-lauded long take that draws us out of the killer's apartment house in *Frenzy* (1972, Alfred Hitchcock). Some critics, including Gilles Deleuze, have mistakenly referred to this shot as a single take.³⁰ But the shot does not dolly back from the house in a single shot but in two shots linked by a classic Hitchcockian hidden cut. When the camera dollies back out of the door leading to the pavement, a man carrying a sack of potatoes walks horizontally (right to left) in front of the camera. When the potato sack fills the frame Hitchcock cuts and rejoins the shot with the frame still filled by a potato sack, but the camera further back than it was in the initial position (perhaps masking the camera operator's backward step off the sidewalk). Another example of this variety of hidden cut is during the opening subjective steadicam point of view shot of *Halloween* (1978, John Carpenter). After the camera 'prowls' from the outside to the inside of a secluded house, a hand enters the frame to pick up a face mask from the floor. At this point the subject places the mask over their face/camera, at which point the image goes to black and a cut is made to a shot with a mask-shaped matte fitted over the

³⁰Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. 1983. (London: The Athlone Press, 1986), p. 19.

lens.³¹ The intention of the hidden shot transitions in each of these representative examples is to render the illusion of a single, continuous shot, often when production problems, set logistics, or technical restrictions make a long take physically impossible to achieve. I will call these long takes that contain camouflaged edits of one sort or another *symbiotic long takes* (where the edit achieves a symbiosis by linking two separate but narratively continuous pieces of film).³² As defined by the examples, the symbiotic long take can be broken down into two types:

- 1) those that employ a carefully concealed lap dissolve that, more often than not, actually *shortens* a long take by eliminating real time, and
- 2) those that employ a carefully concealed hidden edit that (usually) joins different camera set-ups.

All the above examples of symbiotic long takes represent automorphic time. However, if we were to take a symbiotic automorphic long take and substitute the concealed edit with one meant to be noticed as an ellipsis in narrative time, we would have a homomorphic representation of time. An example of such a concealed edit is found in *A Place in the Sun* (1951, George Stevens). The scene in question, at 20'28",

³¹*Detour* (1945, Edgar Ulmer) presents an interesting and potentially misleading twist on this type of mise en trickery in its opening night time diner scene. The long take begins at 3'48" and settles on a close-up of our distraught hero Al Roberts (Tom Neal) seated at the counter. A song from the jukebox plays on. The light in the diner darkens dramatically, casting a ray of light across Al's eyes. The music drops in volume but remains audible, as he begins talking in voice-over about that fateful song on the jukebox. Although the drop in light makes it appear that time has passed from day to night, we may remember that it was already night when he entered the diner. But this is not overly evident from the inside of the diner, which is why this may be misinterpreted as a homomorphic long take. A few seconds later the camera tilts down to a huge close-up of his coffee cup, and then a hidden cut is made on the still shot of the cup at 4'58". The camera then tracks left to a close-up of the jukebox, continuous song and voice-over still audible, and there is a dissolve to the expected flashback at 5'20". What we have here is an excellent example of a symbiotic automorphic long take, where the shift to darkness announces a moment of interiorization (subjectivity), rather than the temporal compression it is more commonly associated with.

³² The Oxford Dictionary definition of symbiosis is: "interaction between two different organisms living in close physical association." In the case of the symbiotic long take, the two pieces of film being fused become the "two different organisms...in close ...association."

consummates a relationship between George Eastman (Montgomery Clift) and his co-worker girlfriend Alice Tripp (Shelley Winters). The camera dollies toward them as they dance in Tripp's darkened apartment, but tracks past them to an open porch window. The camera stops to frame a radio on the window ledge in close-up and a parked car in the background. At 22'10" a very slow lap dissolve occurs, achieving a change in light to demarcate the gradual change from night to early morning. Static hums from the radio, a cock crows, and then we hear the sound of a door opening. Eastman walks past the open window, down the stairs, and out of frame. In this theatrical-like effect, the *mise-en-scène* is used to create the quiet ellipsis from late night to early morning.

Bertolucci achieves an ellipsis of 10 years (1908 to 1918) with a hidden edit in *1900* that joins two long takes of 31" and 1'05". The camera is inside a moving train and pans right along the windows to a young seated boy, Olmo. The camera pans right to the boy sleeping next to him and then to the crowded train aisle, where we see a woman standing. As the train enters a tunnel the image darkens, at which point we hear the sound of a match being struck (and see its tiny yellow flame). The darkened image is used to cleverly 'disguise' an edit. The scene fades back into view, only now we see a male soldier smoking a cigarette standing where the woman was. The camera retraces its movement to show Olmo now as a young man dressed in a soldier's uniform (Gerard Depardieu).

The effect in both these examples is an homomorphic long take, the first representing several hours, the second ten years. The difference between these and the previous examples is that, regardless of whether the audience consciously notices the dissolve or edit, they are meant to understand that there has been a temporal ellipsis in the narrative. Even with the dissolve and edit being as technically subtle as these two

examples, especially the latter, the ellipsis is meant to be understood as such by the spectator.³³ Which is not the case with the examples from *Mother and Son*, *The Sacrifice*, *Frenzy*, or the locus classicus of automorphic symbiotic long take films, *Rope*, where the spectator is expected to read the shots as representing continuous narrative time. The point with the automorphic symbiotic long take is not merely to camouflage technique, but to camouflage what that technique normally implies: discontinuous or elliptical time. Which introduces a companion sub-category: *the symbiotic homomorphic long take*: where the edit achieves a symbiosis by linking two separate and temporally discontinuous pieces of film.³⁴

A final issue that is raised with the first type of symbiotic automorphic long take is whether to consider it as one shot or two shots. In the pre-digital age of cinema, such trickery was the province of optical printing effects, such as dissolves, and mise-en-scène (masking edits with camera movements into dark objects, swish pans, special camera mattes, and other forms of ‘hidden’ cuts). But with the nearly limitless capability of digital and computer technology to mask edits, this form of

³³ For example, in writing about the train scene from *1900* Robert Burgoyne obviously understands the temporal ellipsis but misses the discreet edit. He groups this shot with the earlier discussed machine thresher shot (a pure homomorphic long take). He writes, “In both, the moment of the ellipsis is emphasized by the text, set off so as to highlight its dramatic quality. It occurs, in both scenes, *in the middle of a long-take shot* [my emphasis], with no disturbance or cleavage in the discourse.” His description confirms his omission: “As the train filled with youths leaves the station, the camera focuses on the passing landscape. Then, as the train enters a tunnel, the image is darkened, as we watch one of the children’s guardians light a cigarette. When the train emerges from the tunnel, the ragged boys on board have been transformed into uniformed soldiers...”(64). Burgoyne’s description is misleading on several counts. To begin, the ellipsis occurs *across two long takes*. It is the hidden cut that creates the illusion that there is no “disturbance or cleavage in the discourse.” Plus, the man lighting a cigarette is not the “children’s guardian.” He appears in the shot when it is 1918 and the compartment is filled with men. It is a woman who is standing behind the boys in 1908. Therefore, his description gives no indication of how physically impossible it would be to execute the mise-en-scène changes that take place in between the hidden cut. There is no mise-en-trickery here, only a masterfully hidden cut.

³⁴ By discontinuous, I mean that there is a temporal ellipsis between what the two pieces of film represent in terms of narrative time. To reiterate, in the majority of symbiotic homomorphic long takes the intent is not to ‘camouflage’ the technical discontinuity. Although as we will see with *Ugetsu*, the intended effect can at times be very ambiguous. On the other hand, the intent of the symbiotic automorphic long take is always to conceal the technical discontinuity (edit or dissolve), so as to achieve narrative continuity.

'long take' trickery is far more common today, and will certainly advance in complexity and occurrence over the upcoming years. But though it may become harder to notice, the issue remains the same: is a long take determined by intention or design? As relevant as this may be to technical or ontological considerations of the long take, this bears very little on the artistic and formal-philosophical interests of this thesis. As noted, the intention of these 'tricks' is usually to render the illusion of a single, continuous shot, usually when some factor or factors made a long take physically impossible to achieve. A claim can be made here for creative will persevering over pragmatic limitations.

However, where this decision does hold some consequence for my thesis is in cases where the 'symbiotic' edit would alter statistical analysis. If, for example, a 40" shot symbiotically links one shot of 18" and one of shot of 22", we would theoretically no longer have a long take. In such a situation I will treat the shots as two. This will safeguard against the fact that not all symbiotic edits are created equal. As I noted, there is a difference between a symbiotic edit that actually *shortens* a long take, and one that joins together two entirely different camera set-ups. In principle, the former has more of an 'ontological' claim to being a long take than the latter. Simply because all aspects of the shot, from mise-en-scène to camera movement to acting, are 'performed' within the logistics of a long take. This is clearly not always the case in the second variety of symbiotic long take. Also, whereas the examples from *Mother and Son* and *The Sacrifice* are so well achieved that they escape the attention of even the most attentive viewer (myself included!), in some cases the effect is less deceptive. Take, for example, the hidden cuts from *Frenzy*, *Halloween*, or the many cuts on black objects in *Rope*. Though they achieve their purpose, most viewers are aware of how/when the effect is achieved and merely suspend their disbelief. In any

case, from a purely critical perspective I think it is important that, wherever possible, the reader be informed of such ‘symbiotic’ long takes.

The Force of Narrative Agency

I will now conclude with textual examples of the symbiotic automorphic long with a general clarifying point: automorphic time is always determined by narrative agency, even in cases of a minor incompatibility between the narrative clock and objective screen-time. I will demonstrate this with a scene from *Running Time* (1997, Josh Becker), a film inspired by *Rope*’s technical experiment of employing serial automorphic long takes to render the illusion of continuous screen time. Like *Rope*, *Running Time* conforms its shooting style to maximise long take practice and automorphic time.³⁵ But it goes a step further than *Rope* by giving a stronger sense of temporal urgency to the narrative events, which places it in the class of films known as ‘time dependent’ narratives.

The long take in question (1’47’’) features the four principal characters en route to a bank heist, stopping to repair a flat tire. The scene cuts on the back of a character as he exits the van. The camera, on a steadicam, tilts down to show the flat tire. As Donny (Gordon Jennison Noice) and Patrick (Jeremy Roberts) begin to change the tire, the camera follows Carl (Bruce Campbell) and the safe cracker Buzz (Stan Davis), as they walk around the truck making small talk. The camera completes a 360 degree arc back to the side of the flat tire. Donny and Patrick rise into the frame

³⁵ *Running Time*, which runs a mere 66 minutes, contains more cuts and a ‘quicker’ ASL than *Rope*: 30 cuts and a 2’02’’ ASL compared to *Rope*’s 10 cuts and a 7’14’’ ASL. Being a film of extremely modest means, *Running Time* employs ‘old fashioned’ methods of achieving symbiotic long takes (cuts concealed through swish pans or through characters walking into or past the camera lens). However, all of the long takes in *Running Time* are symbiotic, meaning they are all linked by hidden cuts; whereas in *Rope* 5 of the 10 cuts are direct, unconcealed edits.

and return the tools to the back of the van. On the DVD commentary track director Josh Becker relates an interesting production anecdote about this scene. He informs us that, though they tried, it was physically impossible for the two actors to change the flat tire in the 60 or so seconds it took for the two actors to walk around the truck. This is why the camera does not tilt down to show the changed tire the second time. Instead the audience accepts that the tire was changed in 'real time,' aided by a hidden cut on them going back into the van and driving off (the cut allowing a new tire to be substituted).

There is a second manner in which real time is compressed in this long take. While walking around the van, Carl looks at his watch and says, "we have 9 ½ minutes" [to get to the bank]. This occurs at 19'41". At 20'12" he looks at his watch and says, "we've got 8 ½ minutes." In 31" of real/screen time we move ahead 60" of narrative time. Although there is an incompatibility between screen time and story time, this is still automorphic time because, within the parameters of the narrative, it represents the duration Carl claims. If in the same shot the light would have darkened from day to night, then we would no longer accept the incompatibility. So when an event takes less cinematic time than it would in reality, the time that is being represented can still be automorphic if it operates as such within the narrative, and if the difference is not foregrounded as a temporal anomaly.

Even though the symbiotic long takes are convincingly executed to render the illusion that *Running Time* has represented 66 minutes of continuous time, it still takes a certain suspension of disbelief to accept the high number of narrative events and

action that occur in the 66 minutes.³⁶ There are several factors that make the incompatibility of action/events to actual time past *cinematically* believable. Two relate directly to this film: 1) the foregrounding of its real time structure through symbiotic automorphic long takes, and 2) the frequent references to temporal deadlines (common to the time dependent narrative). The third is of a more general nature, and returns us to Torben Grodal: 3) the spectator's mental set for accepting cinema's convention of temporally compressing quotidian act-schematas. Grodal explains that the, "Experience of time is linked to cognitive processes evaluating causal chains in the (diegetic) world, based on schemata of 'objective time structure' and linked to the construction of the fabula."³⁷ The 'objective time structure' is the accepted time that events and actions take in the real world (act-schemata or situation schemata), which aligns with our perceptual time-space sense of the real world. When these normative times are distorted for the purposes of narrative competence, efficiency, or style, audiences adjust their temporal understanding accordingly. So audiences will accept, even if in the continuous time of a long take, the compression of a phone call, or a social visit, or the amount of time it takes to change a flat tire.

'Soft' Formal-Textual Determinism

I will now offer some reasons for why I feel there is a certain formal determinism between the long take and homomorphic time across the mise-en-

³⁶ The major plot points are as follows: upon being released from prison, the hero Carl sets in motion a bank heist the moment he is picked up in van by his friend Patrick; Patrick has arranged a prostitute for Carl to have sex with in the back of van; two other members of the heist gang are picked up along the way; they rob the bank, but upon exit discover that their driver has abandoned them; they are chased and shot at by police, Buzz is possibly shot dead, and Carl is wounded; Carl and Patrick split up and plan to meet later at the prostitute's apartment; Carl happens across the driver that abandoned them and beats him up; he takes up refuge with the prostitute, and we find out that they knew each other from high school; Patrick arrives; Carl decides to give Patrick the money and leaves with the prostitute for Mexico.

³⁷ Grodal, 141.

trickery category in general, and in particular its Historical Narration sub-division. In reference to *1900*, Burgoyne notes how temporal anachrony plays an especially important role in the historical film: “Although the use of the flashback structure may seem rather ordinary here, it is an unusual figure in the historical film, and it has far-ranging consequences for the overall shaping of the historical text.”³⁸ He demonstrates this point with the example of the elliptical long take that takes us from the fieldworkers in 1900 to the mechanical machine in 1908 (described earlier):

Here two distinct and important modes of historical argument are encapsulated in the temporal transit covered by the figure of the ellipsis –the relation of cause and effect and the relation of the part to the whole. The births of the two boys, Olmo and Alfredo, are linked directly to the conversion to a mechanized form of agriculture....the two births represent a kind of remote cause, insofar as the births are identified with the initiation of the future, the twentieth century, whose effect is mechanization and the dispossession of the fieldworkers.”³⁹

Since the central historical-ideological meaning of this scene is so strongly embedded in the direct link between the birth of the two boys and the mechanisation of labor, I would add that this thematic link is strengthened by employing the continuous time of the long take to represent homomorphic narrative time, in two senses. Firstly, as an effective formal representation of the bond between the boys and history. Secondly, because the surprising nature of the temporal ellipsis, in calling attention to itself, helps foreground the scene’s intended historical-ideological meaning.⁴⁰ As Andrew

³⁸ Robert Burgoyne, “Temporality as Historical Argument in Bertolucci’s *1900*” *Cinema Journal* (28, no. 3, Spring 1989): 62.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 63-64

⁴⁰ Burgoyne’s general thesis is that the mechanisms of the historical process in *1900* are achieved mainly through temporal codes, and that the structuring of these codes gives evidence to a (Marxist) historical interpretation (i.e. the birth of historical consciousness in the peasantry and the belief that the effects of the past have yet to run their course). I am merely adding that the homomorphic long take is a particularly important temporal trope in this case, but also in other such cases of Historical Narration homomorphic long takes.

Horton writes of Theo Angelopoulos, a master of such 'historical' homomorphic time long takes:

...Angelopoulos's combination of long continuous shots with nonchronological time forces the viewer to be actively engaged in the process of "reading" the images that flow before him or her, both for their narrative importance and for their historical significance.⁴¹

In most cases of mise-en-trickery, the long take involves slippery and in some cases complicated re-staging and blocking to achieve the temporal deviation more easily achieved by a straight cut. What is the benefit of making temporal changes in this considerably more difficult way? One important affective difference is that in the latter case the audience discovers the temporal anomaly at the precise moment of the cut. When the shift is made within a shot, the audience may discover the temporal ellipsis (and sometimes its meaning) at a more gradual rate. And in some cases spectators will become cognitively aware of the time shift at different moments.⁴² If we return to the first ten year ellipsis example from *1900* or the examples from *La Famiglia* we can see how this may operate. Hence there is a difference, if minor, in how narrative information or thematic meaning is processed by the viewer. In another sense, as we will see with *The Spider's Stratagem*, the temporal, historical, and thematic ambiguities are directly expressed *through* the temporal ambiguity of the long takes.

Also, even if not always artistically achieved, mise-en-trickery will in the least hold some surprise for the spectator. The reason for the surprise is that the instances of elliptical time in the long take remain relatively rare in comparison to

⁴¹ Andrew Horton, *The Films of Theo Angelopoulos: A Cinema of Contemplation* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 58.

⁴²Of course a "Bazinian-Realist" would also argue that in case of the symbiotic long take, the audience discovers the shift "for themselves," in a more democratic fashion, while with the cut the shift (and meaning) is "revealed to" the audience through an abrupt juxtaposition.

long takes that represent automorphic time. The ‘surprise ‘ in *La Nuit de Varennes* of seeing history change from 18th to 20th century in continuous time, or in similar cases across *Ulysses’ Gaze*, functions in part because of the legacy of the long take’s ‘real time’ association in film history, theory, and practice. Arguably, a similar effect could have been achieved in *La Nuit de Varennes* by cutting from Restif below in the 18th century, to Restif dressed in 18th century garb standing on a street in modern day Paris. But the effect would be different and, arguably, alter the shot’s intended meaning. For argument sake, the camera movement and change in setting within continuous time in *La Nuit de Varennes* can be interpreted as a visual metaphor for the “sweep of history.” This reading would fit with the film’s narrative and thematic scope, and such a visual metaphor would not be as effectively translated through a cut. (In any case, we must concede that Scola had his reasons for shooting the scene in long take.)

My argument for a formal-textual determinism will rest on three more points: 1) on an expressive and thematic/philosophical level 2) on a pragmatic/technical reason, and 3) on the evidence of statistical analysis. For the first point, *The Passenger* and *The Spider’s Stratagem* make interesting case studies. In *The Passenger* the method used to shift to a memory flashback in the continuous time of a long take can implicate a philosophical interpretation. In Bergson’s philosophical dualism he distinguished between two types of memory: habit memory, which is the past remembered through motor mechanisms, and pure memory, which is memory as a unique, independent recollection. According to David Gross, Bergson hinted at a third type of memory which comes to a person unsolicited by the pragmatic needs of perception or independent recall: ‘involuntary memory’ (named as such by Marcel

Proust).⁴³ For Bergson, this memory was potentially disturbing because it could overwhelm a person without providing an apparent practical or creative function. The homomorphic long take in *The Passenger* can be likened to this ‘involuntary memory,’ from both Locke’s and the spectator’s viewpoint, in that the subjective memory comes as a complete surprise to the viewer. What could trigger such an involuntary memory? Borrowing from Proust, Gross explains it this way, “Never a practical action or deed which needs the aid of memory to be interpreted, but it is always some incidental sensation, some unintended (often non-visual) impression in the present.” In this case it is the sound of Robertson’s tape-recorded voice, revealed in the fourth and final shot of the scene as the source of the offscreen/onscreen voice-over, which triggers Locke’s involuntary memory; and likewise the surprising nature of the flashback transmits this sensation of an involuntary flashback onto the spectator.

The Spider’s Stratagem tells the story of a young man, Athos Magnani (Giulio Brogi), who returns to his same-named father’s hometown of Tara to delve into the mythology of his anti-fascist hero-father (who died before he was born). As Athos delves into the past, the film begins to blur distinctions between father and son, past and present, history and myth. The two key long takes occur in the final scene, which returns to the film’s opening location, a train station. Athos, suitcase in hand, arrives in medium shot standing in-between two sets of clear, well kept train tracks. (The condition of the tracks is important to the temporal ambiguity of the long takes.) Athos places his suitcase on the platform and sits to wait for the next train to Parma. The first long take begins on his suitcase. The camera is positioned from the vantage of the train tracks, which are about a foot below the platform. The camera tracks

⁴³David Gross, “Bergson, Proust, and the Revaluation of Memory,” (*International Philosophical Quarterly* 25, 1985): 369-380. Gross claims that Proust appropriated Bergson’s third undeveloped memory for his novel *Remembrance of Things Past*, calling it “involuntary memory.”

slowly along the platform screen right, past Athos who is now seated on the edge of the platform. As it passes by the seated Athos, the camera tilts down past the edge of the platform to the train tracks, also catching a glimpse of Athos' feet as he begins to walk to the right and off-screen. The camera continues its slow dolly along the train tracks, which are now beginning to show signs of disuse. The dolly stops at Athos, crouched over the tracks running his hands through the foliage surrounding the train tracks. The camera tilts up to a puzzled Athos, as he looks to the left of the camera. Cut to what may be his point of view of Tara in the distance. Cut back to the camera dollying slowly screen right along the tracks. The foliage becomes heavier, as if growing before our eyes, until stale, brownish weeds and roots cover the tracks and fill the frame completely. The camera stops and the image fades to black. (Throughout this final shot orchestral music swells to render an ominous tone to the 'swelling' foliage.)

These two long takes (43" and 36") present an interesting discourse on automorphic and homomorphic time. The duration of each shot appears immeasurable. If we take the trajectory literally as going from clean tracks to completely grass-covered tracks, then the temporal leap has been forward: the trains have not passed through the station in years. But we could also ask, who is the crouching figure in the shot flanked by the two long takes? Is it the son looking thirty years into his father's past, or into his own future? Or is it the father looking ahead thirty years to the moment in time when his son will join him (fittingly father and son are played by the same actor)? Near the end of the film events in the present begin to mirror those of the past. The young Athos becomes the father's alter ego, trapped in the 'web' of Tara's myths, history and legends. The two ambiguous long takes are a

physical reflection of his journey: the son joining his father in history.⁴⁴ The play with time during the long takes belies easy automorphic time. The thematic and philosophical weight of the scene is wholly dependent on this ambiguous nature of time. As Bordwell writes, “The last shot ... in emphasizing the ambiguity of duration itself, thus extends the play with time beyond the close of the film.”⁴⁵

On the second point, the strictly pragmatic and technical level, the extended time of a long take is often necessary just for the mise-en-trickery to be executed. In *The Passenger*, when Nicholson is seated at the table in the narrative present his hair is slicked back, he is shirtless, and his body is sweaty. When we see him in the narrative past interacting with Robertson he is fully dressed and well groomed. Hence the mise-en-trickery involved wardrobe and makeup changes which needed to be quickly applied to Nicholson when he was off camera, as was the case for the actors in the example from *La Vita é Bella*. And similarly, in the first homomorphic long take from *Lone Star*, where it was necessary to change the positioning of the actors and the bar’s back wall. Obviously the changes could have been easily achieved through editing. But if the director’s intention is to represent the changes within the shot, then the extra time accorded by the long take becomes a necessary condition. For the third point, statistical evidence on its own provides compelling evidence of a formal determinism between a homomorphic representation of time and the mise-en-trickery long take. Across this chapter I have cited twenty-six examples of the mise-en-trickery category of homomorphic time. These examples were randomly selected, meaning they were the ones that first came to mind or to my attention during my

⁴⁴ The heavy foliage covering the tracks can also represent the titular ‘web’ of history he is trapped into.

⁴⁵ David Bordwell, *Narration in Fiction Film* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 98.

sample screening of films. I have not edited the sampling at all, and yet they are all long takes.⁴⁶

Conclusion

Below is the taxonomy of the types of relationships between the long take and narrative time outlined in this chapter:

Automorphic Representation of Time in a Long Take

- 1) *The Classic Automorphic Time*: the “default setting” of cinematic representation of time, that is, when there is a clearly represented identical equation of screen-time to narrative-time
- 2) *Emblematic Automorphic Time*: continuous narrative time without any apparent temporal anomaly but which, through form and/or style, represents a larger block of fabula than the screen-time
- 3) *Symbiotic Automorphic Time Long Take*: a long take that is joined by a camouflaged edit or dissolve which is not meant to be perceived as a temporal ellipsis. In effect, the long take camouflages a technical discontinuity in time to appear as continuous narrative time

Homomorphic Representation of Time in a Long Take

- 4) *Continuous Homomorphic Time*: where technical time appears continuous, while an obvious temporal anomaly exists in the narrative through such foregrounded stylistic or cinematographical effect as a freeze frame, rephotographed still image, pixilation, or a ‘virtual’ camera (‘bullet time’)

⁴⁶ They are: *La Symphonie Pastorale* (42”), *The Only Son* (1’25”), *La Vita é Bella* (53”), *La Nuit de Varennes* (4’00”), *La Famiglia* (49”, 25”, 38”, 30”, 3’17”, 42”, 1’01” 26”), *1900* (2’22”), *Ulysses’ Gaze* (2’51”, 2’39”, 11’11”), *Lone Star* (46”, 26”, 28”, 40”), *The Passenger* (1’21”, 47”), *Distant Voices, Still Lives* (1’45”, 50”), and *The Spider’s Stratagem* (43”, 36”).

5) *Mise-en-trickery Long Take*: temporal anomaly achieved through a manipulation of the mise-en-scène. The mise-en-trickery can be sub-divided into:

- a) Historical Narration⁴⁷: A shift backward (analepses) or forward (prolepses) in historical time. This is the province of the historical-epic film, or film which deals thematically or philosophically with the discourse of history
- b) Authorial Narration: Identical to (a) except that the context is not 'historical.' Meaning that the shift in time functions to move the narrative. The shift in time is usually from an omniscient narrative point of view, but can contain a flashback (analepses) or flashforward (prolepses) which may be subjective

6) *Symbiotic Homomorphic Long Take*: similar in principle to the *symbiotic automorphic time long take* where the edit camouflages or underplays discontinuous technical time, only here the temporal ellipsis is textually inscribed. Hence the discontinuous technical time is matched by discontinuous narrative time (a perceived temporal ellipsis)

Although the majority of long takes express an automorphic representation of time, there is still a great variety and range of expression of homomorphic time in the long take. This aligns with one of the general points of this chapter: because most long takes express automorphic time, homomorphic time in a long take can be used to effective and surprising narrative and thematic ends. This point will resurface in my case studies. However, even long takes that appear to represent automorphic time can express subtle temporal complexity (such as the *emblematic automorphic time*).

⁴⁷The French narratologist Gerard Genette distinguished between two types of anachronous narratives in literature: prolepses (where the narrative moves forward) and analepses (where the narrative moves backward). For a discussion of Genette's literary theory applied to cinema I address the interested reader to Brian Henderson, "Tense, Mood, and Voice in Film (Notes after Genette)" *Film Quarterly* 36/4 (Summer 1993): 4-17, and Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1978), 63-79.

Some of these noted categories are not exclusive to the long take. However, category five consistently displayed a strong dependency on the long take, and was supported by convincing statistical evidence.⁴⁸ The reasons for accepting a certain formal determinism between this type of homomorphic time and the long take, range from: accentuating the surprise effect of the temporal shift, adding to the shot's expression of theme, mood, or philosophy, allowing production time for the mise-en-trickery to be executed; and conclusive empirical/statistical evidence.

⁴⁸ In fact, with the exception of one or two freeze frame shots, every example of symbiotic long take that I came across through my research, 'Historical' or otherwise, was a long take.

Chapter 5. The Long Take, Narrative Efficiency and Expressivity

- Long Take Experiments in Hollywood: *Rope* and *Under Capricorn*
- The Case of Max Ophuls and George Cukor
- The Long Take and the “Pleasures” of Narrative Detour
- Editing as a Narrative Agent and Stylistic Choice
- Long Take Economics
- Conclusion

CHAPTER 5

THE LONG TAKE, NARRATIVE EFFICIENCY AND EXPRESSIVITY

Introduction

Some cultural and historical links between time, efficiency, and narrative were raised in chapter three. I would like to take this question into a more general area with the goal of arriving at a better understanding of the range of expression for long take practice in popular narrative cinema. Posed as a problem: what are some of the ways in which the long take has been used as an expressive narrative agent? In the article “Moments of Choice” V.F. Perkins discusses the director’s supreme position as maker of meaning in the Hollywood studio era film. Though Perkins concentrates on commonly accepted auteur choices (Orson Welles, Max Ophuls, Nicholas Ray, Douglas Sirk), the essay concludes that the Hollywood System allowed for expressive freedom under certain guidelines: “So long as they were thought to be making the best possible job of the given package of story, stars and resources, they were likely to meet with little resistance to their ideas about how a film should look.”¹

Many technological, economic, and industrial factors led to the supremacy of the master shot/classical editing style (shorter and multiple shot scenes) in Hollywood cinema. However, this did not preclude the existence of certain directors who still preferred a long take style (Orson Welles, Max Ophuls, Otto Preminger, William Wyler, George Cukor, Preston Sturges). To what *extent* and under what conditions (genre, directorial clout, productorial control, etc.) the long take was adaptable to the

¹V.F. Perkins, *The Movie*, Ch. 58, (1981), 1145.

popular Hollywood narrative is another matter. History has shown that, though theoretically possible (*Rope* for example), an exclusive and intense use of the long take was not the preferred choice of the Hollywood production method. For example, no Hollywood director over the majority of their career shot with a long take style as dominantly as an Andrei Tarkovsky or Miklos Jançso. The following quote from Perkins sheds some light on why this may be so: “Those were still the days of the classic approach which valued formal design only so long as it supported the spectator’s involvement, understanding, pleasure and belief in the narrative.”²

Barrett Hodsdon reiterates Perkins in an essay that appeared in a special issue of *Continuum* devoted to style:

The norms of narrative exposition always balanced stylistic extremes (rapid cutting, long takes, off-centre mise-en-scène, etc.) against popular storytelling protocols. Yet even within those protocols some Hollywood directors could display their preference for camera fluidity, depth of field and the long take, e.g. Hawks, Minnelli, Preminger, Fuller, Ophuls, Ford, Cukor, Stahl. If these filmmakers operated within implicit narrative constraints, they were also able to transgress them in surreptitious ways. Although bound by the centralisation of character and drama, these directors demonstrated a great facility in marking out, complicating and refining scenic space so that the spectator was afforded subtly shifting perspective on the diegetic action.³

What comes across clearly here is that stylistic extremes are moderated in popular cinema by certain narrative and story protocols. If the principal factor is narrative, then the question is, what are some of the conditions under which the long take is an effective narrative agent along the lines prescribed in popular Hollywood film (“spectator involvement, understanding, pleasure and belief in the narrative”)? I will explore aspects of this question as it relates to long take practice.

²Ibid., 1145.

³Barrett Hodsdon, “The mystique of mise-en-scène revisited,” *Continuum* 5, no. 2, 1992 [journal online]; available from <http://kalimurdoch.edu.au/continuum/5.2/hodsdon.html>. Internet; accessed December 20, 1998.

Long Take Experiments in Hollywood: *Rope* and *Under Capricorn*

Raymond Durgnat hints at the problematic relationship between the long take and narrative efficiency in his essay, “The Restless Camera”:

Although Hollywood adopted many stylistic mannerisms from the German silent cinema, camera movements tended to be regarded as slow and cissy [sic], whereas cuts were tough, taut and virile....
...Hollywood’s prejudice against camera movements began to dissolve during the 1940’s, when Donen-Kelly and Minnelli musicals made great play with them, and when Hitchcock experimented with the ‘ten-minute take’.... The creepy crawley camera-movements throughout *Rope* (1948) and *Under Capricorn* (1949) suited the film’s creepy-crawley moral atmospheres well enough; but the need to watch out for camera-movements seems to have somewhat stunted the story-development, and the experiment proved sterile⁴

The use of the word “experiment” underscores that there was a norm that was being disrupted or broken by Hitchcock’s use of a radical long take style. Even with the strained thematic justification Durgnat supplies, the extreme long take camera movements in the Hitchcock films are seen as being counterproductive to “story-development.” The problem seems not to be the long take, but the inadaptability of the long take to the demands of Hollywood’s particular storytelling style.

Hitchcock’s *Under Capricorn* (and *Rope*) makes an interesting case study for how a radical long take practice was used in a Hollywood production context. The average shot length (ASL) for *Under Capricorn* is 41”. This is approximately four times as long as the average of the period, estimated as 10.5 ASL by Barry Salt.⁵
However, according to André Bazin the use of the long take in these two Hitchcock

⁴Raymond Durgnat, “The Restless Camera,” *Films & Filming* 15 no. 3 (Dec. 1968), 15 & 17.

⁵Barry Salt, *Film Style & Technology: History & Analysis*, 2nd expanded ed. (Oxford: Starwood, 1992), 231.

films did not signal the revolutionary change in film style that Welles's and Wyler's long take styles did. Simply because, according to Bazin, the latter style placed viewers in a more democratic relationship to the story's action and meaning, while Hitchcock's long take style was merely the equivalent of the classical 1930's analytical cutting style.

But there is a larger issue at stake here, which John Belton defines as, "the nature of the relationship between style and content."⁶ In his classic essay "The Virtues and Limitations of Montage," Bazin argues that in some cases there is a "certain interdependence of nature and form."⁷ The *découpage en profondeur* style of Welles, Wyler, and others is one such instance. He then seems to argue against such an interdependence in *Rope* (and by extension *Under Capricorn*) when he says that "... *Rope* could just as well have been cut in the classical way whatever artistic importance may be correctly attached to the way [Hitchcock] actually handled it."⁸ But Belton takes subtle issue with Bazin, arguing that the change in style has some consequence on the subject because it:

alters the way in which the dramatic content of the shot is read by the viewer: the viewer unconsciously senses the absence of montage and, mesmerized by the long takes and camera movement, perceived the story through the barrier of the stylized suppression of traditional editing techniques which tend to naturalize the action....The *absence of montage limits the audience's involvement with the action and characters* [my emphasis] by eliminating suspense and point-of-view editing. On the other hand, the

⁶John Belton, "Under Capricorn: Montage Entranced by Mise-en-scène," in *Cinema Stylists* (Metuchen, N.J. & London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1983), 44.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid., 50.

*long takes and camera movement become an intrusive presence which distances the viewer from the film's story [my emphasis].*⁹

Without delving into Belton's reading of Bazin, what is instructive are the allusions to the long take's incompatibility with heightened narrative involvement. Why is Hitchcock's "stylized suppression" of traditional editing techniques any more "damaging" to narrative involvement than the stylized Bazinian suppression of editing? The reason could be found in what Belton and Bazin ostensibly agree on, "that there is no essential change in the subject matter because...there is no essential change of style" (between the long take style in *Rope/Under Capricorn* and the montage style of previous Hitchcock films).¹⁰ The reason, then, why this style may feel more narratively alienating is because Hitchcock has attempted to substitute one style (long take) for another (analytical cutting), rather than adapting the style to the content.¹¹ And in doing so he went against (for better or worse) what Hollywood industry norm and hierarchy had deemed as the "better way" to tell a story.

In this sense, Hitchcock's use of the long take in *Rope* and *Under Capricorn* is in fact more subversive than the Bazinian use of the long take, since Bazin's sanctioned style (*découpage en profondeur*) did gain some acceptance within the industry. Bazin did not see Hitchcock's style in these two films as revolutionary because,

⁹Belton, 45. The problem with this argument concerning the expressibility of editing versus the long take in producing suspense is that it is difficult to divorce the issue from questions of story demands, genre context, and personal style. One could argue equally for two types of suspense, one aided by the long take, one by editing. With regards *Rope*, Victor Perkins argues the reverse of Belton in believing that the long take style aids the presentation of content in two ways: 1) by creating suspense and 2) emphasizing confinement by keeping the action and the viewer in strict continuous time and space (V.F. Perkins, "Rope," in *Movie Reader*, ed. by Ian Cameron (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972, 35-36 quoted in Lutz Bacher, *The Mobile Mise en Scene*, (New York: Arno Press, 1978, 68-69). If you take this latter position, you can even argue for a Bazinian fit between form and content (though of course, as this section suggests, Bazin himself does not). So questions of interpretation are also at play. Incidentally, the point made in the first part of Belton's quote ("alters the way in which the dramatic content of the shot is read by the viewer") is similar to my point in the previous chapter regarding a formal determinism at play in the *sympiotic homomorphic* long take.

¹⁰Belton, 45.

¹¹As, for example, Robert Montgomery did in *Lady in the Lake* (1946).

fundamentally, it did not add any new wrinkles to narrative style. It merely did the same thing (analytical editing) in a different way. The problem Hitchcock faced, then, was in trying to adapt an intensive use of the long take style (in terms of duration) to a conventional Hollywood narrative. So that while the ASL for *Under Capricorn* may be comparable to that of later long take specialists, Andrei Tarkovsky or Hou Hsiao-hsien for example, the overall stylistic effect is vastly different.

The Case of Max Ophuls and George Cukor

Max Ophuls provides another interesting case study for the use of a long take style within the Hollywood system. Lutz Bacher has done just that in his excellent, exhaustive book-length study of how Ophuls adapted his working methods and style to the stylistic norms and production methods of Hollywood.¹² From today's vantage, Ophuls's films seem arguably to be a smoother, more effective match of long take style to Hollywood system than either *Rope* or *Under Capricorn*. However, as Bacher notes, Ophuls's four American films were not financial successes. According to Bacher, the two main reasons for their box-office failure are: Ophuls's working methods and, more importantly, his "idiosyncratic visual style."¹³ Even though his films were financial failures, Bacher does feel that Ophuls did, to some extent, modify his visual style for his American films. He begins by distinguishing between two types of mobile long takes in Ophuls's films, the "expressive long take" and the "rhythmic long take":

¹²Lutz Bacher, *Max Ophuls in the Hollywood Studios*, (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1996). Bacher locates four discourses "which through both internal and external conflict produce the film text: the discourse of studio production planning; of production control/management; of artistic decision-making (in short, the creative discourse); and censorship," 9.

¹³*Ibid.*, 2.

The rhythmic long take belongs to the broader category of camera movements called tracking shots or traveling shots...that includes all shots during which the camera moves in a predominantly lateral direction. As a subcategory, rhythmic long takes are distinguished by lengthy camera movements without stops or significant immediate -they may be gradual- changes in camera angle or distance. They contribute to the meanings and moods of scenes by the rhythms they engender through movement past foreground or background elements of the setting (their pace, therefore, being a major variable, sometimes indicated by Ophüls in musical terms like *allegro* or *andante*) and the *juxtaposition* of the moving subject with elements of the setting or *other* moving subjects. By contrast, expressive long takes are shots during which the camera moves to vary angle, height, or distance more or less immediately for emphasis, variation of character dominance, or to connect or relate characters or objects to one another.¹⁴

One of the main distinctions is that the expressive long take is more concerned with narrative matters, such as following characters or objects, pointing out relevant information, or linking characters, while the rhythmic long take contributes to the more abstract area of “the meanings and moods of scenes.” Based on his case studies of *The Exile* and *Letter From an Unknown Woman*, Bacher observes that there was a lower incidence of the rhythmic long takes in the two American films than in Ophüls’s later French films. Bacher adds more with respect to noted changes in Ophüls’s mobile long take style: “...in adjustment to American expectations, *Caught*’s and, especially *Moment*’s camera movements are faster-paced than *Letter*’s.”¹⁵ This would seem to concur with the earlier Maltby and Craven quote that “Hollywood gives movement a much higher status than European cinema.”¹⁶ Bacher continues:

In his later French work, it is those stylistic qualities and a return to the frequent use of rhythmic long takes, together with innovations in narrative structure, that mark Ophüls a modernist and helped his films find success on the American art cinema circuit. But in the subdued

¹⁴Ibid., 5.

¹⁵Ibid., 319.

¹⁶Richard Maltby and Ian Craven, *Hollywood Cinema* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1995), 238.

or “pruned” form they were evident in his Hollywood films, they escaped the attention of most contemporary critics and tended to alienate the general audience.¹⁷

With the latter remark, “alienate the general audience,” we get another subtle implication of an an uncomfortable or problematic^a fit between the long take and popular cinema.

Another director who incorporated an expressive long take use in Hollywood, and arguably in a more successful manner than Ophuls in terms of industry acceptance, box-office success, and longevity, was George Cukor. So much so that his long take style went, for the most part, critically unnoticed. In a recent essay “Notes on the Long Take in George Cukor’s *A Life of Her Own*”¹⁸ Edward R. O’Neill examines this under what he calls the “Cukor Problem”, that being the critical perception of Cukor as a less than interesting visual stylist. He summarizes the usual reasons for this critical perception: that Cukor was an actor’s director, that he staged scenes in a theatrical manner, and that his style was self-effacing (“styleless”). O’Neill writes, “What little the Cukor Problem *does* say ... is that there must be something about Cukor’s style which has allowed it to escape our notice, and this something, this imperceptibility, should itself be characterized.”¹⁹ O’Neill supplies reasons for why Cukor’s use of the long take has remained unnoticed or

¹⁷Lutz Bacher, 319-320. Only as a further support of this point, I will add from Barry Salt’s uninspired “evaluation” of Ophuls’s films, that there is a consistent, though relatively slight, increase in ASL from his American films to his French films: (US) *The Exile* (11.5”), *Letter from an Unknown Woman* (16”), *Caught* (17”), *The Reckless Moment* (15.5”); (France) *La Ronde* (18”), *Le Plaisir* (21”), *Madame de* (16”), *Lola Montes* (18”). I will add that as a consideration of Ophuls’s more frequent use of the “rhythmic long take” style in his later French films, Bacher does not entertain the notion of “stylistic excess” as a potential aspect of a director’s development and maturation. This is not meant as an evaluative observation, but directors have been known to reduce their stylistic palette, or localize one aspect of it, as they get older. Some have called it minimalism, others fetishization. Directors who have been so “accused” include Erich von Stroheim, Joseph von Sternberg, Carl Dreyer, Yasujiro Ozu, Kenji Mizoguchi, Andrei Tarkovsky, Miklos Jançso, David Lynch, and Martin Scorsese (not a bad lot).

¹⁸ Edward R. O’Neill, *Cineaction* 50, 60-69.

¹⁹ Ibid, 62.

unappreciated, by using performance as a focus point for questions of shot length and editing. As he says, “I will analyze formal elements *aside from* performance in order to relate these elements *to* performance.”²⁰

O’Neill begins by discussing ways in which Cukor “disguises the long take,” and makes two necessary distinctions. The first acknowledges the importance of duration to spectator (and critical) perception of style and time. “First, we must distinguish between the duration of individual shots and the role of those shots in relation to the space-time they are meant to denote. The duration of a shot is more *noticeable* when it becomes equivalent with the spatiotemporal unity of an entire scene –the so-called “sequence shot” in which an entire spatiotemporally continuous dramatic unity is captured in a single shot.”²¹ The second distinction is between static and mobile long takes. Which leads O’Neill to comment,

By combining the two distinctions, we can recognize that it is only static sequence shots in which Cukor’s use of the camera and avoidance of editing has been recognized. That is: while Cukor’s static sequence shots have been singled out for praise, if not for examination, the *mobile* long takes, whether sequence shots or not, have passed unnoticed –and this was precisely their design.²²

O’Neill provides several formal reasons for why Cukor’s long takes remain “disguised” that go beyond the usual critical impression of Cukor’s long take style being ‘theatrical’. Rather, O’Neill likens this whole process to part of the subject matter of the work itself: “Cukor uses long takes to emphasize the *work* of staging itself, the theatrical organization of social life as itself a staging of performances....”²³

The key to an understanding of the “Cukor Problem” is to realize the

²⁰ Ibid., 63.

²¹ Ibid., p. 64.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., 66.

symbiotic relation between a performance and the way it was filmed: “thinking of the camera and its filming as a condition for experiencing and reading performances.”²⁴

O’Neill’s central point is that on most occasions when Cukor would employ the long take beyond what was considered the norm it was, in some form or another, at the service of performance (unlike Ophuls, where it also served to underscore mood and rhythm). And since performance was and remains a less appreciated or far less critically coded terrain for visual expressiveness, critical perception of Cukor holds that he is “styleless”. As a consequence, the expressiveness of his long take, “disguised” by (among other things), performance, goes unnoticed, to the point where he was able get away with shots of extremely long duration. For example, the prison scene between Katharine Hepburn and Judy Holliday in *Adam’s Rib* (1949), which lasts 7’30”, but is usually discussed in relation to performance rather than camera style or mise-en-scene.²⁵ Cukor will serve as a perfect segue to the next section, since he will again serve as textual demonstration for one of its central points.

The Long Take and the “Pleasures” of Narrative Detour

To continue with the relationship between the long take and effective narrative design, Jean-Pierre Geuens in his discussion of the steadicam, “Visuality and Power: the Work of the Steadicam,” notes that camera movement not in relation to character movement was “the bane of good filmmaking in Hollywood”²⁶ One of the reasons

²⁴ Ibid., 63.

²⁵ For example, here is Carlos Clarens on Cukor: “It was not until *A Star is Born* in 1954 that Cukor allowed the mise-en-scène to come to the fore. Through the Thirties and Forties, apart from considerations of theme and style, Cukor could hardly be called an innovator. He is, rather, a unique refiner who limits himself to a few genres, developing such a subtle rapport between camera and performer that the 7 ½ minute take in *Adam’s Rib*, the one-shot sequence in *The Actress*, or the hand-held camera in *A Life of her Own*, pass almost unnoticed.” *Cukor*. London: Secker & Warburg in association with the British Film Institute, 1976, 19.

²⁶ Jean-Pierre Geuens, “Visuality and Power: The Work of the Steadicam,” *Film Quarterly* 47 no. 2 (Winter 1993-94), 9.

Geuens claims for this was that the autonomous camera movement breached good narrative etiquette by foregrounding itself: “Viewers conscious of that movement could become aware of a dual set of references functioning on the screen: the diegetic world on one hand and the artist’s effort to enmesh it through a web of his/her own making on the other.”²⁷ Geuens’s point is that when the long take is used in too flashy a manner outside a narrative context, it takes away from the smoothness of the narrative flow. The fancy camera movement or unjustifiably foregrounded long take acts as a “veil” between the narrative and the spectator, and consequently hinders its ability to be involving and pleasurable.

There is, however, a problem with this point, and variations on it made by many (e.g. the long take becomes “boring,” or breaks the narrative illusion, or calls attention to itself). The “dual set of references” Geuens refers to can take many forms outside proper “narrative etiquette” and still remain well within the accepted conventions and norms of popular cinema. In other words, the long take can still be extremely involving and pleasurable for a spectator while not serving the specific demands of narrative. The particular context of a genre is a case in point; and the way that most popular genres allow for what Donald Crafton calls “narrative detours.”²⁸

I’ll give an example from the Italian giallo by Dario Argento, *Tenebrae* (1982). Anthony Franciosa plays a horror writer who becomes embroiled in a murder spree when a serial killer begins modeling his murders on those in his novel. The scene in question occurs about twenty seven minutes into the film, after one murder has already been committed. The setting is outside the two-floor apartment of two lesbian characters. The extravagant 2’30” long take begins outside the first floor window

²⁷Ibid., 9.

²⁸Donald Crafton, “Gag, Spectacle and Narrative,” *Classical Hollywood Comedy*, (New York: Routledge, 1995), 106-119. The context for Crafton here is silent comedy, but a similar argument can be spread across other popular genres.

peering in at one of the women inside the room. The camera begins to crane up diagonally along the outside wall, to the second floor window, where we see the second woman towel drying her hair. The camera continues to crane upwards, moving along the roof ledge, then up, over and across to the other edge of the roof, then tilts to look directly down at the ground. At this point we are disoriented spatially in relation to where the shot began. The shot then cuts to a shot looking into the first floor window again, only this time black-gloved hands are seen widening the slats on the outside window blinds.

This shot is pure spectacle and adds nothing to the narrative or characterisation, but, rather mood and, perhaps, suspense.²⁹ A viewer may become aware of external time (pure screen time, real time, the sensation of sitting in their chair, the lengthening of psychological time), but the shot remains a highly enjoyable moment in the film. Similar moments of the long take as “pleasurable spectacle” occur across most popular genres. For example, the dance number in the musical, the fight sequence in the martial art film, the shoot-out in the western, or the chase sequence in the thriller. (Though, of course, the long take is not necessarily always featured.)

Referring back to the Cukor discussion, I would like to add a second example that demonstrates both another expressive gesture Cukor employed to “disguise” the long take (related also to performance) and the “pleasures” of narrative detour: moments in popular cinema where the action contained within the long take may be

²⁹This type of extended set-piece is an especially common trait in the Italian horror film. Argento, however, is a director known for his excessive style and enthusiasm for exploring cinema technology (a special camera crane was built for this shot). Since Argento is clever enough and well aware of horror film discourse, one could say that the shot is a reflexive gesture on spectatorship and voyeurism in the horror film. The shot begins and ends (with the cut to the black-gloved hands) as the sort of killer’s point of view shot traditionally seen in horror films. However, the outlandish physical space covered by the shot upsets the possibility of it being a subjective point of view (unless the killer is Spiderman!). In the course of the long take the potentially subjective point of view is displaced onto a nebulous, “floating” point of view. In doing so the shot foregrounds the act of looking in a sexual and potentially violent context.

“stalling” the narrative, but still expressing something wholly entertaining. To this end are long takes at the service of purely comedic spectacle performance. In these instances the long take serves to signal the shift from, to quote Henry Jenkins on the vaudeville aesthetic, “narrative space to performance space.” The narrative coasts in neutral while the said comedian (or comedians) engages the camera with comic business (gags and routines) that, more likely than not, originated on the vaudeville or musical hall stage.³⁰ For example, in *Born Yesterday* (1950) the camera remains static and continuous for just under three minutes of a gin rummy card game between Billie Dawn (July Holliday) and Harry Brock (Broderick Crawford). The shot may be “static” and “theatrical” (the film is based on a stage play), but it is the perfect formal gesture for Holliday’s comedic antics to flourish. Throughout the shot an increasingly flustered Crawford, framed tightly left, watches as Holliday, framed right, sings to herself, methodically rearranges her cards after each new one pulled from the deck, counts aloud when dealing, and easily wins two consecutive hands.

In *Pat & Mike* (1952) Cukor uses a series of long takes that give Spencer Tracy the arena to express a range of bemused and shocked facial expressions during and after being rescued from a surefire beating at the hands of two crooked bookies by his athlete protégé Pat Pemberton (Katharine Hepburn). In the scene following her heroics, the participants are asked by the local sheriff to enact the incident. The long takes (39” and 49”) allow the spectator to take in both Hepburn’s nonchalant recreation of her heroics, and Tracy’s not quite suppressed state of shock and emasculation. In each of these examples the scenes are not driving the narrative forward, but the audience is vastly entertained by watching the performers flex their comic muscles (of course because we learn something about the characters, neither is

³⁰Henry Jenkins, *What Made Pistachio Nuts? Early Sound Comedy and the Vaudeville Aesthetic* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 96-126, 185-213.

the narrative at a direct standstill). And the long take is “disguised” in the sense that the viewer is being entertained. Even if viewers become conscious of the duration, they can only conclude that the long take is an integral part of the performance they are enjoying.

Seymour Chatman’s comparative discussion of description in the cinema and the novel can be seen as another explanation for the type of narrative detours I have been describing. In his essay “What is Description in the Cinema?” Chatman examines whether cinema can describe in the same sense as a novel. For example, in a novel there are moments when someone external to the narrative (not a character) describes an object, place or person: “When the narrator describes, the story time stops. But when a character describes, the story time continues, since *the description itself is an extricable part of the story*.”³¹ The problem with film is that the camera is always the narrator. So Chatman wonders:

... How can the camera achieve the posture of
the temporarily detached contemplative
narrator-cum-describer?³²

According to Chatman, cinema’s technical means for doing so, where description is not a “background component of a narrative event,” are rather limited (compared to the novel). The camera “... can photograph objects for a shorter or longer period of time; it can rest on them or sweep past them, slowly or rapidly; it can represent them in whole or in part, in long shot or close shot. And that’s just about all.”³³ Chatman feels that passages that can be called purely description are relatively

³¹Seymour Chatman, “What is Description in the Cinema.” *Cinema Journal* 23, no. 4 (Summer 1984):

5.

³²*Ibid.*, 6.

³³*Ibid.*

rare in commercial films.³⁴ Not because description is theoretically impossible, but because “the conventions that have arisen in cinema as an institution favor action and plot.”³⁵

Chatman does offer a possible way that film can appropriate novelistic description: “My conjecture is that this effect can be achieved only by a kind of deviation from the predictable.”³⁶ Chatman describes two examples from Antonioni to serve his point: one where the camera moves away from the central character, and another where it remains still after the character has left the frame. In the first example from *The Passenger*, the camera’s slow panning movement across a desert landscape begins as if it is the central character’s (John Locke) point of view, but by the end of the movement unexpectedly picks him up in the frame right, nullifying the subjectivity. Chatman claims this is the equivalent of description because the camera “finds the desert of independent visual interest and wants to communicate that interest to us in much the same spirit as a narrator in a novel who...presents an independent view of the scene rather than the one perceived by a character.”³⁷

With respect to the Antonioni example, Chatman refers to the delay in narrative as being “temporally indifferent” and “counterdiegetic.”³⁸ According to these examples, the camera has to be assertively distanced from either the character’s

³⁴Chatman does admit that in popular films something like description occurs quite regularly at the beginning of films or new sequences, as establishing shots, for example, because at this point there is as yet no central character to identify with or who controls the narratorial voice. But these are “relatively privileged moments...and only momentary in duration.” Also, in many of these “descriptive” openings, the camera operates with a strong teleological sense that will soon be linked to either narrative or character (e.g. opening of *Psycho* or *Citizen Kane*). Incidentally, this marks a critical change for Chatman, who a few years earlier wrote, “It is my impression that description per se is generally impossible in narrative films, that story-time keeps going as long as images are projected on the screen, as long as we feel that the camera continues to run.” *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*. (Ithica and London: Cornell University Press, 1978), 74.

³⁵Ibid., 6. This also recalls Deleuze’s classic action based movement-image.

³⁶Ibid., 7.

³⁷Ibid., 9.

³⁸As Chatman notes, French critics referred to this aspect of Antonioni’s films as “temps mort” (dead time).

perceptual or mental point of view, and the object(s) being filmed must have visual interest in their own right. There is no doubt that these both apply to the example from *Tenebrae*. In terms of the long take, time and narrative detour, we can refer to these moments as examples of “counter-diegetic descriptive time” that, in certain cases, give form to a purely visual-auditory, documentary-like “pleasure.”

Hence the long take serves an important function in popular cinema because, for one reason, there are pleasures other than purely narrative that a popular genre such as the horror film offers a viewer. Dirk Eitzen, in his essay “Comedy and Classicism,” makes a similar point in relation to the pleasures offered by “non- or anti-narrative” elements in classical Hollywood film. Eitzen argues that alongside the game-like, problem-solving pleasures associated with the classic goal-oriented, character driven plots there are the “libidinal pleasures of looking at spectacle, violence, and sex [and] the pleasure of relating to the emotions of others”³⁹ In summary, a prolonged camera movement not directly at a narrative service, has the *potential* to momentarily derail a viewer from their involvement in the character and/or narrative to reflect on their own sense of time, or simply time passing (experienced time, the physicality of the viewing experience). The explicit purpose and design for these excursions will, however, vary in quality and nature from film to film, genre to genre, and, more emphatically, from popular film to art film. The above example from *Tenebrae*, for example, draws considerably from Dario Argento’s penchant for exploring horror genre *frisson*⁴⁰ and camera movement technology (technology-as-spectacle).

³⁹Dirk Eitzen, “Comedy and Classicism,” in *Film and Philosophy*, ed. Richard Allen and Murray Smith (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 402-403.

⁴⁰A French word best described as a type of violent, strong, or sudden emotion usually associated with fear; a prolonged “chill.”

Geuens offers the following as a positive function of the long take's ability to foreground temporality beyond the specifics of narrative:

...camera movement functions as a most effective tool in the artist's arsenal, and technology is used to strike a tentative balance between one's sensibility and the resistance of the recorded material...for the viewer it [camera movement] can transcend, for a brief hallucinatory instant, the banality, the anomie of an unrealized present. While this is potentially true of most shots as they make us experience a moment of time and enable us to refer to the present, contain it even, it is mainly the camera moves (dolly shots more forcefully than pans or zooms) that allow the spectator to encounter his or her own "durée," to use Bergson's expression.⁴¹

Though abstract, the quote can simply refer to such moments where the narrative momentum is derailed, as in the scene described from *Tenebrae*. However, if taken more in keeping with its rhetorical flourish, the quote raises a perplexing and potentially metaphysical question: Are there temporal effects within the long take that are beyond the purely narrative? This is decidedly "muddy" terrain, for how does one decide where narrative begins and ends? How do you separate theme from narrative? How do we unglue mood from *characterisation*, narrative or personal? How can one say with certainty that a long take camera movement that tracks away from a central character to an empty frame is taking us "away" from the narrative? Like for example, the short tracking shot in *Taxi Driver* (Martin Scorsese, 1973) away from Travis Bickle (Robert De Niro) talking on the telephone with Betsy (Cybill Shepherd), to a static shot of the empty hallway corridor? Or the shot that lingers on the empty street of an abandoned town after the central characters drive off in *L'avventura* (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1959). Or, more emphatically, the many "empty frames" sprinkled throughout Ozu's films (though many of these are not long takes)? It may

⁴¹Jean-Pierre Geuens, 10.

be analytically possible for heuristic purposes, but such relationships are better understood as being like the varying threads in a cord. One can clearly see the strands, but they would be a mess to untangle.

A similar conundrum exists if the question is asked of montage: are there any temporal effects in editing that are beyond the purely narrative? For example, one could point to examples of the dissolve, jump cut, or fast-cut montage sequence that provide a temporal meaning beyond the purely narrative.⁴² Yet the ways in which editing and the long take render temporal effects (compression, expansion, ellipsis, flashforward/flashback) are experienced differently. Grodal gives the following as an example:

Ellipsis through editing does not possess a strong 'experienced salience' as to felt duration: the four million-year ellipsis in Kubrick's movie *2001- A Space Odyssey* is not necessarily experienced as more elliptical than one lasting forty years. Months may be skipped without the viewer feeling the ellipsis, unless something important for the understanding of the present situation is missing. In two versions of a story of reasonable length, in which the first has scene -ellipsis- scene, whereas the second has scene -episodic sequence- scene, the second will be felt as more 'elliptic' than the first, although the opposite is the case. The temporal 'stretch' will be felt in the second case, because the passing of time possesses perceptual salience.⁴³

Hence ellipsis in-between cuts are dependent on other narrative and contextual factors; and, more emphatically, ellipsis in-between cuts are not felt the same way as ellipsis through the long take (or in shot, or through scenes), because the latter renders 'perceptual salience' to time. Grodal adds that, "to compress by cutting in the act-

⁴²For example, the sense of temporal disorientation or prolongation of the horrific moment in the *Psycho* shower sequence; or the possible interpretation of the jump cuts in Jean-Luc Godard's *Breathless* as a reflection of Michel's (Jean Paul Belmondo) unstructured time/lifestyle.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 141-142.

schemata is felt to be more ‘natural’ than to compress the perceptual sequence.”⁴⁴ So the compression of time in an act such as walking up a flight of stairs or driving to work (an act-schemata) will be perceived as being ‘more natural’ (less intrusive, alienating) if achieved by shortening the act-schemata (editing) rather than if altered within the shot (fast/slow motion, swish pan, trick set, etc.).⁴⁵ The reason for this, according to Grodal, is because most people see the perceptual time-space as an objective phenomenon, and modifications such as fast/slow motion, dissolves, and jump cuts will be perceived as expressing a subjective or saturated variation on objective time-space. The main point is that temporal effects, narrative or otherwise, remain unique to the respective formal device used to render them (editing or in camera).

A narratologist would cringe but, bluntly put, every moment within a narrative film is, ontologically speaking, part of that narrative.⁴⁶ This does not mean that languid long takes not driving a narrative, following a character, or revealing relevant immediate plot information, do not feel temporally different from those that do. The clearest way out of this muddy terrain is to relate the answer to questions of stylistic and artistic choice. If a director employs the long take to state something “temporal”

⁴⁴Ibid., 143.

⁴⁵However, minor compressions in the act-schemata such as the one’s that occur in the ‘flat tire’ scene described in Chapter 4 from *Running Time*, if subtle enough so as not to jar with perceptual schemata, are still compressed act-schematas that ‘appear natural’ (represent automorphic time).

⁴⁶ In fact, Roland Barthes says as much albeit in a more theoretically rigorous manner in his seminal piece on structuralism, when he writes: “Is everything functional in a narrative? Is everything, down to the most minute detail, meaningful?...The fact remains...that a narrative is made up solely of functions: everything, in one way or another, is significant. It is not so much a matter of art (on the part of the narrator) as it is a matter of structure. Even though a detail might appear unequivocally trivial, impervious to any function, it would nonetheless end up pointing to its own absurdity or uselessness: everything has a meaning, or nothing has....Art does not acknowledge the existence of noise (in the informational sense of the word).” “An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative.” *New Literary History* (Winter 1975): 244-245.

alongside narrative (mood, an emotion, a rhythm, an idea, a landscape), it can be seen as an expression of style.⁴⁷ But these qualities are not divorced from narrative. They may overwhelm the narrative moment, as does the protracted camera movement from *Tenebrae*, but at the same time they can add layers of richness and subtlety to it. Hence how a director expresses narrative temporality is an integral aspect of their overall style. Bacher quotes Ophuls to explain his stylistic dislike of the edit: “I feel a jolt with every cut and for that reason I try to avoid it as much as possible -except when it is dramaturgically intended.”⁴⁸ Stylistic choice can be as simple as wanting to avoid an unpleasant “aesthetic” jolt. Or it may be part of a broader “world view,” such as Andrei Tarkovsky’s own explanation for his time-biased art, “I ... see my task to be *the creation of my own, personal stream of time, the realization on the screen of my own perception of the movement or flight of time.*”⁴⁹ In any case, stylistic variation may effect representation of time, but still remains implicated in the broader area of narrative.

Editing as a Narrative Agent and Stylistic Choice

In considering the relative importance of the long take versus editing in relation to narrative efficiency, it is instructive to recall that the origins of analytical cutting were to better serve cinema as a medium for telling more complex stories. Editing was instrumental in cinema’s evolving from a form of early photographic art

⁴⁷ I understand style to mean an interrelation between technique, form and expression. Style is what gives expression to technique.

⁴⁸ Bacher, 1996, 5.

⁴⁹ Andrei Tarkovsky, *Iskusstvo kino 3* (1979), 92; quoted in Maria Turovskaya, *Tarkovsky: Cinema as Poetry*, trans. Natasha Ward; ed. and introd. Ian Christie (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1989), 86.

to a fully developed, self-sufficient narrative art. Tom Gunning, a prominent theorist of early cinema, refers to the early period as a “cinema of attraction” over a “cinema of storytelling.” The term implies that early cinema, with still powerful links to its pre-history (magic lantern, vaudeville, assorted visual gadgets, comic strips, newspaper headlines, etc.), was far less dependent on narrative for its entertainment value than it later would. Another early cinema theorist, André Gaudrault, argues, however, that even the early one-shot Lumière films are narrative in the simplest meaning through their act of “monstration” (showing us something).⁵⁰ However, with the still semantically poor single shot and the absence of cutting, early cinema was bound to “showing” simple acts. More complex storytelling became possible only with the introduction of editing (narration or telling), which “intervened” in the long take to allow for more efficient, complex, and involving forms of storytelling to emerge. And with editing came one of the key narrative formal problems for early directors: how to join shots in a way that would make their temporal relationship legible for audiences. Taking their cue from popular pre-cinema narrative forms, the first solution to the temporal connection problem was to overlap the action from one shot to the next (what early film theorists/historians call non-linear cutting).⁵¹ Once again, we see the genetic function of editing at the service of narration (clarification, visual legibility, etc.). As Jacques Aumont has written, “In cinema montage (editing, sequential ordering) constructs a completely artificial, synthetic temporal relation

⁵⁰ André Gaudrault, “Film, Narrative, Narration: The Cinema of the Lumière Brothers,” *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser & Adam Barker, (London: BFI Publishing, 1990), 68-75.

⁵¹ For example, in George Melies’ *Voyage to the Moon* (1902) we see a rocket ship landing into the moon’s eye in a full shot and then in the next shot of the moon’s surface we see the rocket ship landing again. The American Edwin S. Porter, Melies contemporary, solved the temporal problem in the same way. In *How They Do Things On The Bowery* (1902, but after *Voyage to the Moon*) we see a country pumpkin type lured into a bar by a city woman. The woman puts something in his drink to make him sleep and steals his possessions. When he wakes up and notices his valuables missing he argues with the waiter, who promptly throws him and his suitcase out the door. The scene cuts to outside the saloon, where the complete action of the man being thrown out is repeated.

between units of time which in reality may be discontinuous [sic]. This synthetic time (which a photograph cannot so easily or so 'naturally' achieve) is *without doubt* [my emphasis] one of the factors that pushed cinema towards narrativity and fiction."⁵²

Even a Hollywood director with a predilection toward the long take can feel the determining need of the edit to reaffirm narrative development and engagement. The famous phone booth scene from *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946) is a good example of a Hollywood compromise between the long take and analytical cutting. Bazin discusses the former at great length in his essay, "William Wyler, or the Jansenist of Directing."⁵³ The dramatics of the phone booth scene are set up in an earlier scene where Al Stephenson (Fredric March) tells the married war veteran Fred Derry (Dana Andrews) that he wants him to break off relations with his daughter Peggy (Teresa Wright). For the majority of this scene, Fred is in a phone booth in the extreme left background of the shot talking (we assume) to Peggy. In the extreme foreground we see two men, one a disabled war veteran, playing piano, with Fredric March standing in the mid-ground at the far end of the piano. The point Bazin makes is that Wyler's static camera composes the most dramatically important event in the scene -the phone call- far in the background and the lesser action in plane view in the foreground. Our view of Andrews is partially obscured and the phone conversation is inaudible. Wyler felt that since there is so little information given through the phone call, he could not make it the dominant focus of the scene, and so created a diversion to counterbalance the inactivity of the phone booth. The foreground action bears just enough interest to keep the viewer intent on the main action in the background. But, as Bazin points out, there are two cuts to close-ups (medium close-ups actually) of

⁵²Jacques Aumont, *The Image*, trans. Claire Dajakowska, (London: BFI Publishing, 1994), 126.

⁵³André Bazin, "William Wyler, or the Jansenist of Directing," trans. Alain Piette, adapted and ed. Bert Cardullo, *New Orleans Review* 12, no. 4 (Winter 1985): 47-59.

March that underscore the dramatic intent of the scene. They last only a few seconds, but in both shots March is seen to be far more interested in the phone call than the piano playing, cueing the audience as to where the scene's dramatic core lies.

These two cuts “intervene” in the long take for the purpose of maintaining the dramatic center of the scene. The cuts to what Bazin calls “safety shots” do not pose a problem for Bazin, even though they direct our attention in a decidedly non-democratic fashion. Bazin understands this as part of Wyler's style (whereas he says that Welles would not have been afraid to have allowed the scene go on without a cut). O'Neill writes of an identical situation in the Cukor film, *A Life of Her Own*, where single continuous long takes are interrupted by inserted close-ups (as one of several ways in which Cukor “disguises” the long take). O'Neill argues that such separated shots can be recognized as single long takes with insert shots.⁵⁴ O'Neill offers the following reasons for why the long, continuous shots in *A Life of Her Own* may have been interrupted:

Whether these insert shots are a result of flubbed long takes, an attempt to emphasize the star, *or lack of faith in the technique of the long take itself* [my emphasis] is difficult to say. What is important in the present context is the careful and complex choreography of performers and the camera which is implied by the shooting style, even if the end result is not itself a continuous shot.”⁵⁵

The same holds true for the Wyler scene, and, by extension, most instances where a single continuous shot is “rudely” interrupted by an insert shot. A fourth variable can be added to O'Neill's list: when a studio or producer assumes final

⁵⁴He even suggests the possibility that when working out the film's ASL these shots be counted as one (p. 65, footnote 10)!

⁵⁵O'Neill, p. 65.

editorial control and interjects a cut into a long take against the director's wish. As, we will later see, is the case in *The Magnificent Ambersons*.

The famous piano scene in Wyler's *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946) was filmed as a continuous take lasting roughly 1'17". But for purposes of dramatic and narrative engagement, Wyler saw fit to disrupt the continuity of the take from how it was originally filmed with the two closer shots of Fredric March (edited into the shot at approximately 30" and 45"). This is a stylistic decision very much in keeping with the Hollywood norm, but, in contrast, would not be the choice of someone like Kenji Mizoguchi (or as Bazin noted, Welles). For example, there is a scene in *Osaka Elegy* (1936) that contains two narratively dramatic points, but in contrast to Wyler, Mizoguchi refrains from cutting to underscore or heighten the drama. In the scene in question a young woman, Ayako, tells her boyfriend Nishimura, who she hopes to marry, that she has become a geisha in order to pay back her father's debts and brother's school fees. The dramatic revelation begins with Ayako walking into the background of the shot/room, talking with her back to the camera. After holding the shot for 1'20" there is a reverse cut to her face, but she soon walks away from the camera and sits down in profile. Too agitated to sit still, Ayako gets up and walks to the right background corner of the room, with her back to the camera, continuing her tearful confession. Nishimura stands stoically with his back to the camera in the left foreground, forming a dramatic diagonal to Ayako in the right background. Though dramatically we crave to see Ayako's facial expression, Mizoguchi does not cut. Instead Ayako stands and walks to Nishimura, grabs him by the shoulders and forces him down to the floor with her. She is near hysterical, begging him to marry her. We now see Ayako's face, but the dramatic highpoint has shifted to Nishimura's reaction. The take lasts two minutes, but there is no cut to Nishimura's face.

Long Take Economics

The two above examples demonstrate different approaches to maintaining or shifting dramatic interest in a scene by two directors known for shooting in a long take style: Wyler by editing and Mizoguchi by withholding the edit. It would be impossible to do justice to all the possible reasons and factors behind these two choices: industry context, production method, cultural differences, stylistic preference, economic context, etc. I will discuss one such factor that impinges on long take because it is the one context that is perhaps most often brought up, especially by filmmakers: economics. Many filmmakers are on record stating that shooting in a long take requires some if not all of the following: ample rehearsal time, intricate blocking and set preparation, state of the art technology, technical skill, and a comfortable shooting schedule. In production terms, this translates to a medium to high production budget.

Welles has admitted that his style was often conditioned by economic and production determinants. Quoting André Bazin,

By Welles' own admission, the recourse to extremely fragmented editing [*Othello*] doesn't mean that it represents a set position for him in opposition to long takes, but is merely the result of practical contingencies in the film's realization, particularly the lack of money.⁵⁶

Welles himself says, "I obviously prefer to control the elements in front of the camera while it's rolling, but that requires money and the producer's trust."⁵⁷ Jean Renoir said that when he made his first films in the US he was under economic

⁵⁶ André Bazin, *Orson Welles*, with a foreword by François Truffaut, a profile by Jean Cocteau (France: Les Éditions du Cerf; Los Angeles: First Acrobat Books, 1991), 110.

⁵⁷ Bazin, *Orson Welles*, 110.

pressure that led him to abandon his fluid long take style for a more conventionally edited style, in the belief that the latter style would be more commercial:

...when the product is expensive, one wants to be sure that it will please the client –the only method is that of safety; and for that reason shots and reverse-angle shots are needed, long shots, medium shots of a kind that enable one to almost make another film after a few retakes, Now, I had never done that. But I did it for *This Land is Mine*, because there was so much at stake.... I really framed the film and made a decoupage as for a commercial film, allowing for many changes in the editing.⁵⁸

In the case of Welles, an economic theory of the long take may be borne out by the fact that *Othello* and *Mr. Arkadin*, two low budget films, have quicker cutting rates than *The Magnificent Ambersons*. But Welles proves the economic/production theory fallible when you realize that one of his lowest budgeted films, *Macbeth*, has the longest average shot length of any of his films.⁵⁹

This economic determinant is flipped around when you realize that under certain production factors the long take becomes a cost saving measure. One such context is the plethora of extreme low budget studios that existed alongside the major and minor Hollywood studios (sometimes referred to as Poverty Row). For expediency purposes, the films from these cut-rate studios eschew the time consuming master shot set-ups that would require many different camera and lighting set-ups. Instead they have the scene play out in a long take, usually with a static camera and/or reframes. This is evident in for example, *How to Make a Monster* (1958), or the films of Ed Wood and William ("one-take") Beaudine. But because the motivation is purely

⁵⁸Jacques Rivette and Francois Truffault, "Entretien avec Jean Renoir," *Cahiers du Cinema*, 34 (April, 1954), 4; quoted in Lutz Bacher, *The Mobile Mise en Scene*, (New York: Arno Press, 1978, 68-69), 58.

⁵⁹Orson Welles & Peter Bogdanovich, *This is Orson Welles*, preface and ed. by Jonathan Rosenbaum (New York: Harper Collins, 1992; First Harper Perennial edition, 1993), 212.

economic, to save time and money, rather than creative or aesthetic, the long take merely foregrounds what is usually bad acting, lighting and set design.⁶⁰

Lutz Bacher discusses the economics of the long take at considerable length in his Masters thesis, *The Mobile Mise en Scene: A Critical Analysis of the Theory and Practice of Long-Take Camera Movement in the Narrative Film*. After examining the production history of several long take stylists (Murnau, Ophuls, Dreyer, Welles, Rossellini, Bertolucci, Mizoguchi, and Renoir), Bacher decides that one can not be conclusive with regards to whether the long take is a costly or economical shooting style. Bacher notes: "In many cases, substituting less costly pre-preparation time (pre-planning and rehearsals) for production time can help increase savings."⁶¹ He argues this in respect to Max Ophuls: "It may well be that his long-take shooting style made up to some extent for his expensive sets and costumes."⁶² He also shows this to be the case with Kenji Mizoguchi, whose budgets and shooting schedules were only slightly higher and longer than the average Japanese film of his time."⁶³

However, while long take economics remains an open issue dependent on many variables, there is one factor about the long take that Bacher feels is conclusive:

But in terms of film-makers' license to make long-take camera movement films, another factor had much more pervasive consequences: the desire for control of a films' final form by producers and financial backers....mobile long takes do not lend themselves to manipulations of content in post-production....There is a direct correlation between the extent customary within a national industry of the director's powers to control the final shape of his work and the prevalence of long-take camera movement films. This is why in the studio-dominated Hollywood of the thirties and forties, the true long-take camera movement

⁶⁰A few directors managed to make the best of these conditions and did put these economic restrictions to creative and stylistic use. Two examples would be Joseph H. Lewis and Edgar Ulmer.

⁶¹Lutz Bacher, *The Mobile Mise en Scene: A Critical Analysis of the Theory and Practice of Long-Take Camera Movement in the Narrative Film* (Masters thesis, Arno Press Cinema Program, 1978), 187-188.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 185.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 184.

film (as opposed to films with tendencies towards long-take camera movement) was almost always limited to exceptional circumstances where the director did have discretion, and why in European countries where the director's position is more autonomous, long-take camera movement has been more common.⁶⁴

Therefore with regards to the long take, the concern for producers was not strictly budgetary, since a long take film could be broughtⁱⁿ under budget. The concern was with questions of content and in having the choice to alter such things as pacing, length, structure, and ending to better suit what they deemed were the particulars of audience demographics and taste. Of course in the end it all came down to economics, since the producers wanted to ensure that the film would appeal to the largest possible audience. Strictly speaking, it would appear that for the majority of popular narrative cinema, content is a more determining factor in "bounding" the expressive range of a long take than economics (acknowledging of course that they are indelibly linked).

Does a similar relationship between industry norms and long take style exist today? The shape of the US film industry has changed, with the major studios today being vastly diversified and tied to huge conglomerations that own or control the major theatre chains (Disney, Fox, Paramount, Warner Bros., Universal, MGM/UA, Columbia). Extensive sampling would be necessary to make any conclusive claims. But based on my broad general viewing habits, I would hypothesise that a parallel situation still holds true today between films that are financed by the major studios and films that are independently produced. In that, as a general rule, the long take style is more prevalent in independently produced films than in those produced by a major studio (i.e. films by Spike Lee, John Sayles, Jim Jarmusch, Neil LaBute, Martin Scorsese, Hal Hartley, Todd Solondz, and Mike Figgis, to name only a few). And, in keeping

⁶⁴Ibid., 112.

with Bacher's findings (dated from the mid-1970's), the long take is used more commonly and more intensively in Asian or European art film than in American popular film.⁶⁵ Another determining contemporary factor is the looming prospect of wholesale technological changes to digital filmmaking. Not only is digital filmmaking less costly than celluloid, but it poses far less technical hurdles for shooting in extreme long take style. This is far too involved an issue to even begin to address, but if a wholesale industry change to digital technology were ever to occur, it would be extremely interesting to see what the long term effects on long take practice would be.⁶⁶

In summary then, one could generalize that all these factors -productorial control, control of final edit, working method, narrative norms, and industrial economics- mitigates against the probable use of a radical long take practice in

⁶⁵The working methods of Jançso's radical long take practice provide another interesting perspective on the question of long take economics. Jançso begins with a shooting script that runs about 2-3 pages of outlines, and then improvises on location. The goal of each shooting day is to get one shot in the can. This may appear very inefficient, but is not if you factor in that the shot represents anywhere from 6 to 10 minutes; which is in fact a very decent amount of footage for one day's work. Maltby and Craven estimate that two-and-a-half to four minutes was the average final footage for an 8-10 hour shooting day during the Hollywood Studio days (301). Jançso's particular choreographic use of camera and character movement requires a unique shooting practise whereby yards and yards of dolly tracks are laid and each shot is then endlessly rehearsed and eventually filmed prior to losing sunlight. Usually 3-5 takes are enough. Because he communicates choreographic orders by walkie-talkie through the many speakers hidden throughout the set, the shots are filmed MOS and dubbed in later. The editing process is, in effect, achieved in-camera and only involves selecting the best takes and splicing together the self-contained sequence shots (Gideon Bachmann, "Jançso's Plain," *Sight & Sound* (Autumn 1974): 217-221).

⁶⁶The most obvious hurdle digital filmmaking clears is the 10-minute limitation of the conventional film magazine. Although a 20-minute magazine has recently become available, perhaps in response to digital camera technology. The first digi-film to really make an impact on long take practice is Mike Figgis' *Time Code* (2000). The film was shot with four separate cameras each running in 93 minutes of 'real' real time. After exhaustively rehearsing the action and shooting several takes of each action, Figgis chose the best of the 'takes' from each camera to composite into the finished film. The screen was then divided in four frames, with each simultaneously showing one of the four camera's action. The budget of this film, according to Figgis, was "in the low millions...about 5 percent of the \$60 million that is spent on the average major studio production" (*The New York Times*, Friday, November 19, 1999). Making such a film on celluloid would have been pretty much impossible. Digital technology also made it possible for a low budget Montreal-based horror film called *Slashers* (2001, Maurice Devereaux) to be made in the tradition of *Rope*. The film is about an extreme live reality-TV game shows where contestants are chased through the studio set by the show's appointed 'in-house' serial killers. It features a film-within-film structure composed of dozens of symbiotic automorphic long takes that simulate live transmission 'real time.' Budgeted well under one million dollars, the director has told me that the film could never have been made with that budget on celluloid.

popular narrative cinema. To date this is empirically supported by the fact that a *consistent* radical long take practitioner has yet to emerge from a Hollywood popular cinema context. Nonetheless the long take remains an important and expressive element of popular cinema. Ophuls is one of several clear indicators of this. At the same time, Ophuls is an indication that, regardless of how it may be articulated, there is a limit to long take stylistic expressivity in popular cinema. For as Bacher's study indicates, even with modest attempts to adapt his visual style to Hollywood norms, Ophuls's American films were commercial failures and "tended to alienate the general audience." However, these "limitations" are so well synchronized to the system and its end design (narrative, genre, entertainment, escapism) that they provide, in equal measure, creative support and inspiration. They are stop signs if seen from the outside; guide posts if seen from the inside. It is clear that as one steers in the direction of the radical long take practice, more abstract considerations of "meaning and mood" vie with narrative momentum -however relative one may be to the other. This long take practice leaves room for the rhythmic lulls, static moments, protracted silences or empty frames that one finds regularly in the films of Michelangelo Antonioni, Bela Tarr, Carl Dreyer, or Andrei Tarkovsky, but rarely in a film by Howard Hawks, Tsui Hsark, Steven Spielberg, or James Cameron. The shift is not qualitative, but perhaps best expressed as philosophical: a Deleuzian shift from the movement-image to the time-image.

Conclusion

There are "norms" at play in popular narrative cinema that grow out of economic and industrial concerns, narrative protocol, and genre expectations.

However, these norms are exceedingly flexible and allow for a great range of long take expressivity, so long as the “expression” maintains narrative and/or spectatorial interest through story or character development, character or narrative mood, and specific genre conventions that allow for narrative “detours.” Some of the noted narrative detour ‘pleasures’ which allow for long take expressivity are: genre detours such as comedic performance, spectacle attraction (technological marvel, special effects, sex, etc.), and ‘counter-diegetic descriptive time.’ The flexibility does, however, have a limit. This explains why there has never been a director working in popular narrative cinema to consistently work in radical long take practice (though that could conceivably change with digital technology). Lutz Bacher’s research has shown that the relationship between long take practice and economics is inconclusive, and that productorial control over content and final edit is a stronger factor against the use of a long take style than pure economics (though they are linked). If a director employs the long take to state something “temporal” *alongside* narrative (mood, an emotion, an idea, a rhythm), this can be seen as an expression of style, but not divorced from narrative. The nature of film production, fixed as it is to schedules, budgetary and technical restrictions, and shooting logistics, can sometimes impinge on the feasibility of long take expression. But, as I have demonstrated with Hitchcock, Wyler, Ophuls, and Cukor, practical and creative perseverance and flexibility is in evidence across all forms of narrative cinema.

Chapter 6: Long Take Practice Case Studies: Introduction to the Corpus

- Welles, Mizoguchi, and Tarkovsky
- A Note on Cultural Specificity
- Conclusion

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CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO THE CORPUS

Welles, Mizoguchi, and Tarkovsky

Beyond obvious personal taste, the above three directors have been selected to represent my case study analysis of the long take and temporality for reasons ranging from appropriateness to methodology. To begin, these directors are all remarkably creative practitioners of the long take, each with a secure spot in the annals of film history. Although this is not a study with auteurist designs, using canonized films ends up benefiting my methodology in the following sense. One of the aims of this thesis is to demonstrate that a philosophical formal-textual analysis that concentrates on time and the long take can yield novel insights into these films. Succeeding at this level with films that have a large volume of critical literature can only make the achievement more compelling. In the process, I hope to lay down a groundwork for analysis that can be applied to a broad variety of long take films/filmmakers. For this reason, each of the three directors has been chosen to represent a particular approach to the long take. It is also toward this reason that my selection represents a national and historical cross-section. Collectively the works of the three directors span from 1922 (Kenji Mizoguchi, *Blood and Soul*) to 1986 (Andrei Tarkovsky, *The Sacrifice*) - though my textual analysis study will not cover this far- and represents three national cinemas: Japan (Mizoguchi), United States (Welles), and Russia (Tarkovsky). Mizoguchi made all his films in his native country, while Welles and Tarkovsky also worked outside their respective nations: Welles (Brazil, France, Great Britain, Italy, Morocco, Spain), and Tarkovsky (Italy, Sweden).

Collectively, their works also span a diversity of production/industry conditions. Welles took his bumps and bruises working his way through the Hollywood studio system. Mizoguchi managed much more productively within Japan's similarly structured studio system (monopolistic, vertically integrated industry, dependence on star system, genres, etc.). While Tarkovsky paralleled Welles' rocky relationship within a post-Stalinist State run film industry.

Compared to Tarkovsky, the films of Welles and Mizoguchi place a higher emphasis on narrative efficiency ('narrative plenitude'). By this I mean that the films are more story and plot-driven than Tarkovsky's. This is largely because both Welles and Mizoguchi worked within a popular, market-driven industry. Welles continually challenged -and some would say expanded- the classical narrative system. Mizoguchi worked within an industry that was influenced by the Hollywood narrative system, but that also developed its own culturally autonomous narrative patterns and codes. Tarkovsky worked within what could loosely be called art cinema. Though each director has their own expressive use of the long take, more importantly for the purposes of this study, is the variety it plays within their overall formal and stylistic system.

Welles did not, for aesthetic or philosophical reasons, prefer the long take to expressive editing and montage. He is on record stating that he values editing over other creative components in cinema:

Editing is essential for the director; it's the only time he has complete control over the form of his film. When I shoot, the sun dictates certain things that I can't fight against, the actor makes certain things happen that I have to adapt to, and the story does this as well.... The one place where I exercise complete control is in the editing room; it is only then that the director has the power of a true artist.¹

¹*Orson Welles*, André Bazin, trans. from French by Jonathan Rosenbaum. (London: Elm Street Books, 1978), p. 110.

But Welles also says, “I obviously prefer to control the elements in front of the camera while it’s rolling, but that requires money and the producer’s trust.”² Bazin, who championed the long take, interprets this to mean that the long take “remains an ideal for Welles [but] editing remains...a creative element of prime importance.”³ Welles’s films bear out an aesthetic flexibility to apply both the long take and editing expressively according to matters that go beyond budgetary or production crew quality. So that within a film, for reasons ranging from economic to thematic, Welles would alternate from a *mise-en-scène* style to a quicker cutting style. The long take was just one important but not necessarily dominant device within Welles’ aesthetic, artistic, and stylistic palette. I will call this approach the “Dialectical” long take practice.

Because of the length of his career and its consequent diversity, Mizoguchi’s style is hard to typify in an easy, pat way. Even though most of his early films are lost, critics have tended to divide Mizoguchi’s career into pre-and post-Second World War periods -some carrying evaluative claims with the periodization. For example, Noël Burch in his seminal book *To The Distant Observer*, prefers Mizoguchi’s mature work (which he refers to as 1935-39) to his later 1950’s films, primarily for ideological reasons. More of Mizoguchi’s later (post-World War 2) work is extant, and we can see a tighter commonality in their extended use of the long take (the one-scene, one-shot method, as Japanese critics have called it). However, elements of the long take style were present in his 1930’s films, though as part of a more varied palette. It is safe to say, based on the extant films, that the pre-war Mizoguchi consisted of a more diverse and eclectic style than the later 1950’s Mizoguchi films.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

This tendency toward the long take is what separates Mizoguchi's style from Welles, in that Mizoguchi's use of the long take holds a more dominant position in relation to editing. Mizoguchi even justifies the hierarchy of the long take by noting the influence of studies by a Japanese psychologist on "attention." Dudley Andrew writes:

Mizoguchi always claimed that his desire to leave intact the spectator's psychological flow was responsible for his unusually long takes. He even cites a psychological experiment conducted around 1930 [by Dr. Konan Naito], demonstrating the effect of sustained as opposed to interrupted vision of a scene. This experiment suggested that the nearly hypnotic effect of the single take makes up in intensity what it loses in detailed information.⁴

However, while more dominant than in Welles, the use of the long take is not dogmatic and does not preclude the appearance of conventionally edited scenes or expressive edits. So that even Mizoguchi's most firmly planted pre-World War 2 long take film, *The Story of the Last Chrysanthemum* (1939), with its ASL of 59", contains three Kabuki scenes shot in conventional editing codes and one non-Kabuki scene that uses crosscutting. I will refer to this type of long take practice as "Synthetic" because, while the film's overall narrative structure is subservient to the long take, in the whole, there is a more harmonious relation between the long take and instances of quicker cutting.

In the final case, with Andrei Tarkovsky, the long take becomes the exclusive structuring principle and a preferred formal device. There are no scenes organized around classical notions of scene construction such as master shot, shot counter shot, etc., and expressive editing -cuts that in themselves create meaning through

⁴ Dudley Andrew. *Kenji Mizoguchi: a guide to references and resources*. (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1981), p. 37.

juxtaposition or contrast- are quite rare. I will refer to this as “Radical” long take practice. In the radical practice the long take becomes an artistic credo, and in most cases, is given theoretical sustenance by the director or explained as part of a philosophical/aesthetic position or worldview. Briefly, for Tarkovsky this credo is translating human and experiential time to cinematic terms:

Time cannot vanish without trace for it is a subjective, spiritual category....*Time, printed in its factual forms and manifestations*: such is the supreme idea of cinema as an art.... On that idea I build my working hypotheses, both practical and theoretical.⁵

As one moves from the first to the third group, the length of shots become longer, as does the ASL, and, in general, the overall pace slower. In a general stylistic sense, this sustained use of the long take leads to an increased dependence on what I call “camera choreography” (camera movement in combination with mise-en-scène). Camera choreography, which includes camera movement, rack focus, zooming, *découpage* in depth, extensive character blocking, and sets that are specially constructed for camera movement, becomes an alternative or companion to the classical scene construction method (master shot, shot counter-shot, close-ups, reaction shots, etc.). As you move from group one to group three, the structural importance of editing diminishes. Though editing does not by any means disappear, the earlier noted quote from Welles concerning the importance of editing is not a sentiment you will likely hear expressed by Mizoguchi or Tarkovsky!

I should clarify that the average shot length (ASL) on its own is not necessarily conclusive in defining long take practice. For example, not every film

⁵Andrei Tarkovsky. *Sculpting in Time: Reflections on the Cinema*. Translated by Kitty Hunter-Blair. (London: The Bodley Head, 1986), p. 58, 63.

with an ASL comparable to *The Magnificent Ambersons* (18" ASL) will necessarily be an example of dialectical long take practice. A film with a median shot average of 18" could actually contain very few long takes and not be an example of a dialectical long take practice film. For a film with such an ASL to qualify it would have to contain a fairly diverse scene construction style. While a film with an ASL of 25" or 26" may theoretically, depending on the breakdown of the long takes, the number of long takes, their length, and other such factors, fall into either the dialectical or synthetic long take practice. Ideally, I would need to sample dozens of films to arrive at conclusive figures, an extremely time-consuming endeavor well beyond the limit of this thesis. I will, however, broaden my scope with other sampled films to establish some statistical benchmarks for distinguishing the three long take practice groups.

A Note on Cultural Specificity

Even a subject that appears as abstract as the experience of time is influenced by cultural factors.⁶ The critical and analytical position I hold throughout my thesis does not deny this importance. In fact, the myriad ways that cultural factors influence the cinema experience is of such importance and complexity that it would warrant a thesis of its own. My feeling has always been that watching a vast array of national cinemas encourages one to learn more about the culture in question. I see myself as part of a larger critical and scholarly community that hopes in some small way to help bridge national and cultural barriers. By birth (Canadian) and parentage (Italian), I am a cultural 'outsider' to the three nations represented in my case study films: US,

⁶ See for example, A.J. Gurevich: "Time as a Problem of Cultural History" in *Cultures and Time* (Paris: The Unesco Press, 1976), 229-245, and Jeremy Rifkin, "Anthropological Time Zones," in *Time Wars: The Primary Conflict in Human History* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1987), 48-66).

Japan, and Russia. However, I would not want to go in the direction of maximising this ‘difference’ or assuming that a film’s cultural context is so enveloping that I remain completely alien to its experience. This can just as easily lead to errors in critical judgement or interpretation. As is, for example, Noel Burch’s invigorating yet flawed, Marxist inspired analysis of Japanese cinema. Burch sees 1930’s Japanese cinema as being as yet un-influenced by the West, and reads it as being ‘modernist’ in comparison to the Western institutional mode of representation (IMR). But in fact, Hollywood films were regularly seen in Japan during the thirties, and Mizoguchi is on record as being influenced by Joseph von Sternberg.⁷

⁷Earlier in this chapter I mentioned the differences that Noël Burch cites between the mature (1935-39) and the later (1950’s) Mizoguchi were ideological in nature. I will join the Burchian debate over what these differences mean in a necessarily long footnote. In his book *To the Distant Observer: Form and Meaning in the Japanese Cinema*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), Burch rhetorically wonders why Japan has produced a distinct film production style and code system compared to other non-western nations. (Though this does not hold true today in light of such culturally specific film industries as those of India, Iran, and Hong Kong.) Burch notes that Japan is the only nation not to have been colonized -until 1945 and the Allied Occupation- in 2000 years of history. So Japan “trained her own technicians, developed and printed her films in laboratories owned and operated by Japanese; she even manufactured her own film stock” (27-28). Also, and very importantly for Burch’s Marxist position, “For Japan is also the only major capitalist nation in the world today which has never known a true bourgeois revolution in any guise whatsoever” (29). This sets up the backdrop to his central argument that claims a “purer” Japanese-inflected film culture in the pre-WW2 period. According to Burch, Japanese film looked more like European film until its Formative Period, when differences began to appear. By the late teens and into the 1920’s, Western codes appeared, but never “as a system.” Rather the Western codes were used either sporadically for dramatic effect, judiciously, as in some cases with Ozu and Mizoguchi, or liberally in some cases, such as Futagawa Montabe (who is acknowledged as being Japan’s archetypal neo-western director). But things changed after World War 2. Burch notes a deterioration of the purity of Japanese aesthetics during and after the SCAP Occupation Forces (1945-1952) and their attempt to “liberalize” Japan. For Burch this democratization process signaled an intrusion of bourgeois ideals of anthropocentrism, humanism, and liberal ideology, an intrusion that also effected film style. Burch sees the pre-WW2/Occupation cinema as “untainted” (or far less tainted) by the West, and sees the effects of imposed Western democracy and liberalism as a leveling of Japanese postWW2 film. Within this context, Burch sees Mizoguchi’s mature films as pandering to Western tastes, compared to his thirties, more Japanese-coded films. For example, in describing a sequence shot from *Sisters of Gion* (1936), where the characters are constantly filmed in long shot, with ample space above their heads, he says, “The whole of this procedure, the distance, the de-centering, underlines, moreover, the ultimately non-anthropocentric quality of Mizoguchi’s mature style....To all intents and purposes we are watching a slide show or, again, the doll theatre” (227). For Burch *The Story of the Last Chrysanthemum* (1939) represents Mizoguchi’s most “Japanese” refusal of Western narrative codes, which implies that Mizoguchi was doing this *consciously*. The long take is not, as he claims it is in the later “academic” Mizoguchi, obsessed with itself to the point of disregarding decoupage. Burch isn’t claiming that 1950’s Mizoguchi eliminates decoupage, but that it is more closely aligned with dominant Western codes. “The camera in these later films was of course, as supple and free-moving as it had ever been before, but totally subservient to a stylized version of the dominant code” (244). Hence he reads Mizoguchi’s elegant, sustained long take style vis-à-vis neo-realism, the 1940’s humanism, William Wyler, John Ford, and Orson Welles. But instead of criticizing Mizoguchi’s style, one could equally marvel at how Mizoguchi could adapt his style so well to these

In a similar sense, Hungarian scholars Bálint András Kovács and Akos Szilágyi provide a culturally based reason for Tarkovsky's remarkably slow long takes by relating his use of time to the Russian-Pan-Slavic heritage; specifically the orthodox liturgy which, at six to eight hours, is far longer than Roman liturgy. In orthodox liturgical service everything surrounding the subjects -the icons, the sacraments, the church itself- represents the presence of God on earth. It is understood that the prolonged length is necessary in helping the participants to feel the holy. The length of the ceremony is at the service of this sacred sensation. The authors feel that Tarkovsky's extremely long takes can be better understood within this Orthodox and Pan-Slavic cultural context.⁸ Although I would not deny the relevancy of Christian and Biblical iconography to an understanding of Tarkovsky's aesthetic framework, he can not be pigeonholed into the Orthodox religious tradition. Tarkovsky's religious feelings, while overt, are anything but 'orthodox.' As Peter Green claims, Tarkovsky's religious feelings were "a curious mixture of orthodox Christianity, fundamentalism, Messianic vision and freethinking."⁹ Which is why his films are open to multifarious spiritual meanings (from Christian, to Pantheism, to Fideism, to Humanism). Even if we grant the authors a relevant cultural point, this reading tells us nothing about the actual mechanics of time within a Tarkovsky long take, and what is

newly imposed Western values, and still make staggeringly beautiful films that are still deeply informed in every way by Japanese culture. Burch claims that these films are "westernized," yet if you compare *Ugetsu*, *Sansho the Bailiff*, or *The Life of Oharu* to a neo-realist film, a Wyler film, or a Welles film, how in all honesty can you say that they are similar? In the chapter "A Rule and its Ubiquity" Burch lays down a major part of his argument: Japanese art, such as Kabuki theatre and doll theatre, is presentational rather than representational. There is no attempt to "hide" the mechanics of the art, to hide the fact of an actor being an actor; the sets being sets, stagehands dressed in black changing props on stage, etc. His point is that the Japanese viewer is attuned to this breakdown of the "play" between performer and spectator. The Euro-centric problem with Burch's argument is that he likens this "play" as some form of Brechtian-like distancing or anti-illusionism effect. Hence Burch applauds the post-1960 new wave adoption of Marxist-Brechtian strategies (Nagashi Oshima), yet these borrowings -though they are on the correct side (i.e. the left)- are as much an intrusion of the West as Mizoguchi's refined, "Westernized" late long take style.

⁸ *Les Mondes D'Andrei Tarkovski*, trans. from Hungarian by Veronique Charaire (Lausanne: Editions L'Age d'Homme, 1987), 35.

⁹ Peter Green's *Andrei Tarkovsky: The Winding Quest* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), 5.

happening within the long take that renders a sense of prolonged or slowed down time. One must also consider the broad range of nations and cultures represented by the figures of Eastern and Western art cinema that Tarkovsky acknowledges as an influence on his own film style.¹⁰

So, who or what do we trust as a cultural gauge for his style and his 'temporal tonality'? I do not think we need to overvalue one approach or avenue at the expense of the other. In the end, although I may sometimes rely on cultural specificity as a basis for interpretation or analysis, my methodology and subject is foremost conditioned by forms of *film* culture: film history (knowledge based on a broad-based viewing of national cinemas), film style (long take practice), and film theory (formal analysis). Though these are obviously not divorced from the context of national cultures, I feel they are sufficiently neutralized by the goals and nature of my thesis.

My extensive viewing of long take films from many national cinemas led me to the hypothesis that, cultural or stylistic difference notwithstanding, many films that employ the long take to a considerable degree can be grouped together into one of three different modes or types of long take practices: Dialectical (directors who alternate from the long take to quick cutting within the same film), Synthetic (where the long take is dominant but does not preclude the appearance of conventionally edited scenes or expressive edits), and Radical (where the long take becomes the exclusive structuring principle). This is not a stylistic grouping, since directors in one group can have different styles, but a quantitative measure of long take usage *relative*

¹⁰Tarkovsky has acknowledged the following directors as an artistic influence on his development as a filmmaker: Kenji Mizoguchi, Robert Bresson, Akira Kurosawa, Luis Bunuel, Michelangelo Antonioni, Federico Fellini, Ingmar Bergman, Alexander Dovzhenko, Jean Vigo, and Charlie Chaplin. See, Julian Gaffy, "The Private Lives of Russian Cinema," *Sight and Sound* March 1993, 29; Vida T. Johnson and Graham Petrie, "Tarkovsky's Pantheon," in *The Films of Andrei Tarkovsky: A Visual Fugue* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994, 26-30.

to the film's overall structure and style. This general idea was formed before I started writing my thesis, and dictated the parameters of my case study selection. But I did not finalize my three case study films until (approximately) the end of my first year. In fact I could have chosen three different films to represent the three long take practices without affecting the essence of the thesis.

Conclusion

In summary, outside of the obvious (but nonetheless important) consideration of personal preference, my criteria in selecting the case study films was to represent: a national and historical cross-section; a diversity of production and industry conditions; and directors who are acknowledged as remarkable practitioners of the long take, yet who are stylistically, artistically, and culturally different.¹¹ So these three films, *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *Ugetsu*, and *Stalker*, will function as case studies representing three different strategies of long take practice: Dialectical, Synthetic, and Radical. Even though I have seen the three case study films prior to

¹¹Along with the already noted affinity between my long take practice grouping and Deleuze's paradigmatic shift from movement to time image, another factor that unifies these three directors is the particularly important roles they have within his philosophical reading of film history. These three directors, especially Welles and Tarkovsky, are key players in Deleuze's shift to a time-image. Welles, who worked primarily in the period of the movement-image, is, according to Deleuze, the first director to present a time-image. Tarkovsky is acknowledged by Deleuze as one of the more important practitioners of the time-image and is discussed in the preface to the English edition of *Cinema 2*, and at length on pages 42-43, 75, and 129. Mizoguchi is accorded more space in *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, though also mentioned briefly in *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*.

selecting them, in no way can I have predicted the findings and insights that have been culled from my placing them into the context of my thesis. It is in this sense that my 'findings' will reveal unique readings of the case study films, while advancing a novel method of formalist film analysis.

Chapter 7: *The Magnificent Ambersons* (Dialectical Long Take Practice)

- Introduction
- The Long Take, Time, and Theme
 - George vs. Eugene: Linear Time and Progress*
 - The Kitchen Scene: The Long Take and the Metaphysics of Confinement*
 - 'Spatial' Configuration & The Long Take: The Staircase*
 - Social Time*
 - Time as Fading, Death, and Loss*
- Deleuzian 'Sheets of the Past'
- The Long Take and Scene Construction
- Conclusion

CHAPTER 7

THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS (DIALECTICAL LONG TAKE PRACTICE)

Introduction

In this section I will examine my first case study film, *The Magnificent Ambersons*, employing close formal textual analysis and contextual statistical analysis to discuss how the theme of time informs the film's form and content, with a major emphasis placed on the role of the long take. Given how relevant the theme of time is to the film's subject (social history), the relationship between social time and film time will be stronger here than in the other two case studies. Alongside this analysis of the long take, time, and meaning, I will discuss how the long take relates in particular to the film's overall narrative structure.

The Long Take, Time, and Theme

Both the production and story time of *The Magnificent Ambersons* were moments in history imbued with importance and drama. The release of the film coincided with the entry of the US into the war, not exactly optimum timing for a film dealing with loss and tragedy. More importantly for the thematic relevance of time, the film spans a period, 1873-1912 (taken from calculations made by Robert L. Carringer from the original shooting script), that saw culture-shaking innovations in the fields of communication, transportation, industry, science, and art. For example, the period saw the implementation of Standard Time (1884) to accommodate

transport and communication industries, and the birth of photography and cinema, the latter an art that grew directly out of this period's fascination with and investigation of movement and speed.¹ *The Magnificent Ambersons* deals with the social effects of these changes on the American way of life. The focal point for these changes is the automobile, one of America's prized icons of speed, power, identity, and mobility.

The automobile stands in for the far-reaching technological innovations at the end of

¹And as many have noted, the early development of cinema was directly shaped and influenced by these scientific, technological, and industrial advancements. This is a very complex subject, which I can only sketch out here. The invention of cinema came about when it did not by chance but because of certain developments in science, technology, and communications. The last half of the 19th century/early 20th century saw a point of convergence around speed, movement, and efficiency that grew out of these varied technological advancements and inventions (attempts to control and commodify time and the spatialization of time). As industry developed in the fields of communication, media, transportation, and art, Western society became, naturally, extremely interested in the nature of movement, speed, and time. Scientists became interested in analyzing the effects of movement and speed by breaking it down and analyzing it. Which is what the cinema does: takes a real movement in time, breaks it down into static images and gives it back continuous movement (life) through the mechanism of cinematic projection (light, speed, movement). The analysis of movement, speed, and dynamism was quickly sprouting into fields beyond science, such as entertainment (with optical toys such as the zoetrope) and entertainment/education (with the magic lantern). Like the cinema, these optical toys reproduced the illusion of continuous motion through means of alternating successive still images by the varying play of light/dark and rapid movement. In a sense cinema was the culmination of 'picturing time': beginning all the way back with the camera obscura in the 15th century, the magic lantern and other optical toys of the 19th century, to Etienne-Jules Marey's chronophotograph, to Eadweard Muybridge's serial photographs and zoopraxiscope. Alongside this, philosophers engaged these scientific, technological and social advancements through discourses relating to movement, image, time, and perception. Bergson was perhaps the exemplary philosopher in this regard, as he was caught in the middle of all this and gave the most vocal, expressive, and poetic argument against this rational and intellectual urge to fragment the world. Bergson's philosophy of time sprouted from the same 'moment' of great social, cultural, technological, and scientific change that gave rise to cinema. For example, in 1824, thirty-five years before Bergson's birth, the scientist Peter Mark Roget first describes the phenomenon known as persistence of vision, which leads to the explosion of optical toys and motion study experiments. While Bergson was graduating from university, Étienne-Jules Marey's invented the 'chronophotographic gun' (1882). Six years after the introduction of Standard Time and Frederic Taylor's 'time study' experiments with 'scientific management' (1883), Bergson writes his first book, *Time and Free Will*, a plea against the period's intense fragmentation and commodification of time. A year after the Lumiere brothers' famous train, Bergson writes *Matter and Memory*, his painstaking account of movement, perception, and memory. The Modernist artists of Bergson's time were quick to use his philosophical ideas of time and movement as inspiration for their art. The cinematic quality of the Italian Futurist art can be seen as a direct result of their attempt to capture the flux and energy of time with a static, plastic art. Bergson was the first thinker to articulate the mechanism of cinema in its broadest sense: as 'moving matter.' With such a symbiotic link between Bergson's writings and the 'idea' of cinema, we can see why Deleuze refers to Bergson as cinema's "first film theorist." For elaboration of this fascinating area of study I refer the reader to the following sources: Donato Totaro, "Time, Bergson, and the Cinematographical Mechanism," online on *Offscreen* at http://www.horschamp.qc.ca/new_offscreen/Bergson_film.html); Michael O'Malley, *Keeping Watch: A History of American Time*. New York: Penguin Books, 1990; Donald M. Lowe, *History of Bourgeois Perception*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982; Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983, and Marta Braun, *Picturing Time: The Work of Etienne-Jules Marey*. (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

the 19th century that changed the face of the American city, its social customs, and economic landscape. The social and economic effect of the automobile is represented in the film through changing demographics: the spreading of the city into concentrated industrial centers and outreaching suburbs. As Stephen Farber writes, “*The Magnificent Ambersons* deals with the price of technological “progress” -the contamination of the city and the influence of the automobile on modern American life, an extraordinary subject for a 1942 film.”²

The film begins with an imposing long take (55”) which fades in from a black frame already filled with Welles’ nostalgic voice-over narration (“the magnificence of the Ambersons began in 1873”). As the image fades-in, a bygone era opens up to us. The camera is held fixed, reflecting the leisurely pace of the pre-industrial age, a pace that will soon be replaced by motorized streetcars and personal automobiles. From an extreme long shot of the street, we see a transport carriage enter frame left and a stately house in the background. A woman is seen hailing the vehicle from the upstairs window. The voice-over informs us that the car “would wait for her” while she “shut the window, put on her hat and coat, went downstairs, found an umbrella, told the girl what to have for dinner, and came forth from the house.” Though there is a tension between the calm voice of the narrator and the image of the woman rushing to catch the carriage, we must ask ourselves, would, in an industrial age, a bus even wait for a woman waving from her front window? The point is that the changes brought on by the transport industry affects not only pace of life but social custom. In a small, quaint town the driver would probably know each patron by name, and think to wait until the person boarded the bus. But with the expanding cityscape afforded by

²Stephen Farber, *Focus on Orson Welles*, ed. Ronald Gottesman (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1976), 123.

faster transportation, the citizen becomes an anonymous patron rather than an individual. Hence a loss in the sense of community.³

With the introduction of motorized transport cars and work-time schedules, the luxury of waiting for individual patrons will be a thing of the past. Patrons will conform to the bus schedule, rather than, as in this recreation, the other way around. This static long take chisels out a block of time, a memory-image of a time that will be no longer, and that, in all likelihood, never existed in quite the way Welles depicts. It is interesting to note that this static long take is quite atypical of the general vibrancy and sense of movement characteristic of the first half of the film. It is only in the second half of the film that long takes with little or no movement become dominant. As such, the static long take is a formal foreshadowing of the later more languid pace and tragic (for the Ambersons family) events. But since this is the beginning of the film, the lack of movement is not yet fully marked by the sense of oppression and loss it will attain by the end of the film.

³This fits in perfectly with Canadian philosopher Harold A. Innis' monumental study on the social history of time, *The Bias of Communication*, Intro. Marshall McLuhan, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951). In the latter part of his career Innis became extremely concerned with communication and how it effected the shape and structure of social and cultural organization. Innis believed that each mode of communication, and hence society, shared a particular bias toward time or space, leading to an unstable society. Rather than looking at the time-space dialectic in the philosophical terms of "spatialized time," Innis charted a near complete history of the communication mediums and their respective biases toward either temporal or spatial values. Mediums that were heavy, cumbersome and difficult to transport, such as clay, parchment, and stone led to a temporal bias and knowledge over time. The unadulterated voice, because of its distance limitations, also falls under this category. Light, easy to transport mediums, such as papyrus, paper, print, and electronics led to a spatial bias, and knowledge over space. Most important for Innis were the effects that these biases imposed on society's structure. For example, the following dialectical list of cultural and organizational values characterized the biases of a "time biased" society vs. a "space biased" society: duration vs. expansion, continuous vs. transitory, the past vs. the future, history vs. geography, religion & the church vs. science & empire, ethics vs. politics, the community vs. the individual, and decentralization vs. centralization. (For a more detailed discussion of Innis in relation to film time, I refer the reader to my essay, "Family Viewing and the Spatialization of Time," *Offscreen*, www.horschamp.qc.ca/new_offscreen/Family_Viewing.html). The shift which occurs in *The Magnificent Ambersons*, and which is subtly foreshadowed in this opening shot, from the pre to post-automobile era is clearly a shift from a "time biased" society to a "space biased" society.

As discussed in Chapter 4, this opening long take is one of three in the film's opening scenes that represents a sense of temporal typicality, an *emblematic automorphic time*, like something out of a Victorian photo album. These shots are of comparable length: shots 1 (55"), 34 (52"), and 61 (46"). One could form an interesting thematic parallel between the opening shot and shot number 61. In the first shot we see in the background the respectable but modest home of Mrs. Johnson, a member of the "silk or velvet class." The house forms an interactive part of the public space represented by the shot, with the tramcar and town residents in the middleground, and Mrs. Johnson running from her house to catch the tramcar. By contrast, in shot 61 the ostentatious Amberson house, which is also in the background of the shot, is formally separated from the foreground by the rear projection and the mannered framing and composition. The effect is an elimination of any sense of public space. The contrast accentuates how the Ambersons are isolated in the cocoon of their 'bygone era.' Given the class distinction provided by the coupling of these two *emblematic automorphic time* long takes, it is not surprising that the brunt of the social and economic collapse brought upon by progress is borne by the Ambersons.

The next relevant series of long takes occurs in the justly lauded Ball scene (4).⁴ In this scene, movement and direction become an important formal device for the intersection of time, theme and the long take. The sequence begins with a dominant forward movement: a dolly shot that follows Lucy (Anne Baxter) and Eugene (Joseph Cotten) into the Amberson mansion for the beginning of the Ball. The camera dollies through two sets of doors, the wind howling as if blowing Lucy and Eugene into the house. This is one of the many images that suggest a sense of fading, and the flux of time that will carry away all that the Ambersons have represented through three

⁴A scene by scene breakdown of each case study film appears in Appendix 1.

generations of wealth, land, and social standing. Also, already present in this shot is what Torben Grodal calls ‘spatial-associative’ time, that is, a shot that echoes and gains narrative or thematic resonance through the repetition of an action, event, or movement.⁵ In this case, recalling the memory of Eugene’s previous two rejections at the same front door.

In the second long take in this scene (shot 76), the camera recedes slowly following Lucy and George (Tim Holt) as they extend their acquaintance. On the left we see and hear Uncle Jack (Ray Collins) greet Eugene, the camera continuing its grand backward dolly, at once serving narrative exposition and rendering a graceful spatial dignity to the Ambersons through the long take’s slow unraveling of regal, haptic⁶ space. A few shots later (shot 78), the scene cuts to the upstairs floor to a similar backward dolly of George and Lucy walking arm in arm. This shot is part of the film’s first sustained period of long take activity, the second of five consecutive long takes (78-82) that total 5’45” of screen-time. The change of pace from the opening scenes adds a sense of “Ambersonian” stateliness to the leisurely moment, and a mood of calm that befits the pre-industrial period that will soon evaporate.

The next key long take among this cluster is shot 81, which ends with a left to right pan to Fanny (Agnes Moorehead), Eugene, Isabel (Dolores Costello), and Jack walking toward the punch bowl table, joined by Wilbur and the Major (Richard Bennett). A few moments later George and Lucy walk into the frame, so that for a fleeting moment we have a densely filled frame where, for the first and only time in the film, all eight of the principal characters are present: Wilbur, Isabel, Eugene, Jack,

⁵Torben Grodal, *Moving Pictures: A New Theory of Film Genres, Feelings, and Cognition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 149.

⁶Haptic, which pertains to the sense of touch, refers to a space that feels open and inviting; a space that one could walk into if the laws of physics were not in place. It stands in opposition to optic space (referring to the sense of sight), a space that is cluttered and closed off, lacking the sense of an entry point (like a frame from a Josef von Sternberg film).

the Major, Fanny, George and Lucy. The sense of wholeness projected by the long take's spatial and temporal formal unity and the "togetherness" enforced by the cramped framing is one of the film's many subtly ironic moments. This apparent formal unity is just that, only formal, since we will soon learn of the many personal and emotional tensions that form a taut web around this extended family (sexual repression, unrequited love, love suppressed by social and class decorum, Oedipal relations, personal jealousy, and ideological rifts). Seeing the family together in this shot also functions as a microcosm for the whole ball scene, which is the last great hurrah for the Amberson family.

George vs. Eugene: Linear Time and Progress

The scene continues with the group dispersing. The camera selects George and Lucy as they stop at the punch bowl table. Eugene and Jack soon join them briefly from within the background space. The shot cuts to Eugene and Jack in a space contiguous to the punch. This long take contains a crucial piece of dialogue between Eugene and Jack, capped by an equally important and related figure and camera movement.

Jack: Eighteen years have passed, but have they? Tell me, have you danced too with poor old Fanny this evening?

Eugene: Twice.

Jack: My gosh, old times certainly are starting all over again.

Eugene: Old times! Not a bit. There aren't any old times. When times are gone they're not old, they're dead! There aren't any times but new times!

As the final word is out of Eugene's mouth, he leads Isabel in a highly mannered dance step forward, with the camera matching their elegance with a backward dolly. Both the dialogue exchange and the camera and figure movement underscore the film's (not necessarily Welles') seating in a linear conception of time, and Eugene's unabashed acceptance of linear time and progress. While Jack expresses the possibility for a cyclical return to the past ("old times certainly are starting all over again"), to which he will symbolically return in the later train station scene, Eugene brushes it off with certain finality: "when times are gone...they're dead." Eugene offers no chance at history or the past repeating itself, and underscores his ideological position toward technology and progress by marching forward in space (time). In doing so, becoming ironically blind to the circularity that will soon befall him in his (failed) attempt at marrying Isabel.

Throughout the film, in fact, there is an interplay between the linearity that the film's treatment of history embraces and the sense of circularity brought forth by the repetition of scenes, shots and locations. For thematic purposes the film is threaded on a linear conception of time because the Ambersons "fall behind" this forward movement of time and the changes it brings about. As critic Gaston Roberge writes, "in *Ambersons* the main character is destroyed by his denial of change, and indirectly of time."⁷ The cyclical turns within an overall linear time frame is not a contradiction but a demonstration of time in its full complexity. Events occur again, creating a sense of déjà vu, though in a Bergsonian sense, nothing can be repeated in the same way since each event contains the memory of the previous. Hence repetition *with* change.

⁷Gaston Roberge, *Another Cinema for Another Society* (Calcutta: Seagull Books, 1985), 47.

This recessional movement by the camera is one of many in the ball scene that renders a positive feel by helping to articulate the greatness of the Ambersons in spatial terms. This will stand in stark contrast to later recessional movements that render a sense of loss. Eugene and Isabel dance beyond the camera right out of frame's view, to be replaced by Lucy and George, who enter the frame left and walk toward the camera into a close profile two-shot. Another dialogue exchange ensues, where Lucy's query into George's career ambitions are treated with mock irony:

Lucy: "What do you want to be?"

George: "A yachtsman!"

At this point, echoing Eugene's movement in reverse, George leads Lucy in a dance step backward away from the camera. While they recede in space the camera dollies back slightly as more couples dance into the frame and Lucy and George disappear from view, while Isabel and Eugene dance back into view. These two opposing movements from the central male figures are indicative of their respective positions vis-à-vis the theme of modernity versus tradition, and by extension, linear time. George and Eugene represent two moral attitudes to the broad encroaching changes brought forth by industrial change. George is the romantic idealist looking to the past; Eugene the realist looking ahead to the future.⁸ As James Naremore writes, "The movements of George and Eugene have exactly corresponded to their respective attitudes as reactionary and progressive...."⁹

⁸It is interesting to note that their conflict parallels the North-South economic divide that was the principal cause of the Civil War (which ended in 1865, only eight years before the beginning of the Ambersons' "magnificence"). George represents the South's agrarian-feudal based economy and Eugene the North's industrial-capitalist economy.

⁹James Naremore, *The Magic World of Orson Welles*, First Southern Methodist University Press edition, 1989 (Oxford University Press, 1978), 100.

In the broadest philosophical sense, the movement to a linear conception of time has had strong social, moral and religious reverberations. John Hassard, in his “Introduction: The Sociological Study of Time,” expresses it as such:

For archaic man events unfolded in an ever-recurring rhythm ...Eliade suggests that when Christian man abandoned his bounded world for a direct, linear progression to redemption and salvation, then for the first time he found himself exposed to the dangers inherent in the historical process. Since then man has tried to master history and to bring it to a conclusion – as, for example, Marx and Hegel sought to do. Modern man seeks refuge in several forms of *faith* in order to rationalise a process that seems to have neither beginning nor end.¹⁰

The historical process set in motion in the film results in the concurrent decline and rise of the Amberson and Morgan family. What forms of faith are represented in the film to “rationalise” this historical process? With no outward signs of Christianity in *The Magnificent Ambersons*, one must look elsewhere.¹¹ The most obvious form of faith is “progress,” with Eugene its principal disciple. While George seeks faith in the comfort of the glorious past and resists technology, Eugene embraces it. This can be glimpsed early on in the playful opening montage sequence, where we see Eugene gleefully accepting each new change in menswear fashion. As such, Eugene represents an allegiance to industry, progress, and linear time. And, as Helga Nowotny notes, “The ... history of the Western linear system of time is closely connected with industrialization and the brutal adaptation of human labour and life to the machine.”¹² Along with Eugene’s dance “forward” in space, the most telling indication of his acceptance of technology and progress comes in his wonderfully scripted speech during the dinner scene when he replies to George’s abrasive

¹⁰Hassard, John, ed., *The Sociology of Time* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, and London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1990), 9.

¹¹Except two moments with George, the Pieta between Isabel and George in scene 23, and George’s kneeling and praying for forgiveness at Isabel’s deathbed in scene 28.

¹²Nowotny, Helga, *Time: The Modern and Postmodern Experience*, trans. Neville Plaice (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 15.

interjection, “Automobile’s are a useless nuisance”:

I’m not so sure George is wrong about automobiles. With all their speed forward they may be a step backward in civilization. It may be that they won’t add to the beauty of the world or the life of men’s souls -I’m not sure. But automobiles have come, and almost all outward things are going to be different because of what they bring. They’re going to alter war, and they’re going to alter peace. And I think men’s minds are going to be changed in subtle ways because of automobiles. And it may be that George was right....

This thematic tension provides the one context in which George can be seen in some semblance of a positive light. In his opposition to being defined by profession or swayed to the side of technology, George can be seen as a prototype of American Individualism (or Romanticism).¹³ Charles Dudley Warner wrote in 1884, shortly after the invention of standard time and contemporaneous with the period of the film, that “the chopping up of time into rigid periods...is an invasion of individual freedom, and makes no allowances for differences in temperament and feeling.”¹⁴ George’s resistance to technological change can be seen as a desperate (Bergsonian?) attempt to salvage individual freedom from the rigidity of clock-time. This industrial clock-time is subtly represented through the first part of the diagonal, assembly line-like long take (1’45”) tracking shot in Eugene’s automobile factory scene (10).

I will conclude the discussion on the opening two scenes with a general point regarding the telling difference between the sense of time flowing across them. In the

¹³Though there is little outwardly that links George to the Romantic movement per se, his desire to live life for the moment and flippant disregard for a professional future bears a passing resemblance to some Romanticist tenets. Donald M. Lowe, comparing the Romantic versus Christian meaning of transcendence and supernaturalism, writes, “For the romantics, the world was thoroughly immanent and natural. They emphasized the illumination of the moment, whether that moment in time was a mere present or an intimation of eternity....The romantic moment was a rejection of the objective development-in-time; instead time was to be overcome from within.” *History of Bourgeois Perception*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 56. This could be linked to my positioning of George against Eugene’s acceptance of linearity and progress.

¹⁴quoted in Michael O’Malley, *Keeping Watch: A History of American Time* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 149.

opening scene the time order is linear yet forcefully, almost playfully, indeterminate. Though the flux of time is narratively present in the opening montage sequence, we are barely conscious of the temporal ellipsis' because they are not foregrounded in any conventional cinematic way. The opening scene condenses thirty-one years, from 1873 (opening voice-over) to 1904 (beginning of the ball), in less than nine minutes of screen time. The ball scene covers an evening in approximately the same amount of screen time. Yet there is a stronger, more palpable sense of time-flux in the ball scene, even though time is advancing at a less elliptical, more realistic rate than in the opening montage scene. When we get to the end of the ball, with most of the guests gone, the rooms swathed in darkness, and the music toned down, there is a far greater sense of time having past than in the many years that elapsed during the previous montage.

This is in good part because the ball scene is shot in fluid, long takes, which in the context of this film, is a more evocative visual metaphor for time passing than is montage. This relates to Grodal's remarks concerning the four-million year ellipsis in *2001: A Space Odyssey*. To reiterate his point, the cut from a hovering bone to a spacecraft is not necessarily experienced by the viewer as any "more elliptical" than one of a month because "ellipsis through editing does not possess a strong experienced salience as to felt duration." As Grodal adds, ellipsis through editing is perceived as being a cinematically natural form of temporal compression or elision; and in the case of the opening montage, so natural that we barely notice the huge and

sometimes irregular leaps in time.¹⁵ Victor Perkins also notes of the opening scenes, “The film’s game with time has become boisterous and unpredictable. We are invited to share in pleasure at the plasticity of image and sound, their openness to interruption, displacement and manipulation.”¹⁶ I would add that this unstructured and disordered temporality precisely reflects the shape of time before it would turn to the structured, controlled time of industrial capitalism (soon to be represented by the entrepreneur Eugene).

The Kitchen Scene: The Long Take and the Metaphysics of Confinement

The equally famous “strawberry shortcake” kitchen scene (9) contains the single longest take in the film: 4’25”. As a long take it is dependent for its full meaning on spectatorial memory and evokes the film’s broad theme of the Amberson family’s inability to adjust to the changing times. After a brief establishing shot of the exterior mansion at night, the long take begins with a slight left to right pan following Fanny in silhouette at the kitchen sink to a table in the foreground. The camera then remains static (until a slight reverse pan at the end). The center of the action is in the mid-ground, with George, having just returned from college, seated next to Fanny and

¹⁵It is interesting to note that the long takes in the ball sequence are linked by the type of rational cuts Deleuze associates with the movement-image and the sensory-motor link that characterizes the rational cut: cuts made on action and/or across contiguous time/space (dissolve from stairs to top floor; cut from Eugene waving off-screen to Lucy, etc.). This makes a telling comparison to the latter half of the film, where scenes/shots are often linked by less “rational” cuts that signal, for Deleuze, the weakening of the sensory-motor link and “more profoundly in the link between man and the world...” (*Cinema 2*, 173). Relating this to the film, we can say that through the course of the film there is a subtle shift from the movement-image (when the Ambersonian world was in harmony) to the time-image (when social change results in a “breakdown” between the Amberson class and the world). However, it should be noted that much of the temporal indeterminacy that seeps into the latter half of the film is a result of the studio’s tampering with Welles’ original design (editing out scenes, changing the order of scenes, reshooting scenes, etc.). For a detailed analysis of these changes I refer the reader to Charles Higham’s *The Films of Orson Welles* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1970, 48-71 and Robert L. Carringer’s *The Magnificent Ambersons: A Reconstruction* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1993).

¹⁶V.F. Perkins. *The Magnificent Ambersons*. (London: British Film Institute, 1999), 38.

eating her delicious strawberry cake. As Bazin has eloquently pointed out, there is a tension between the small talk and Fanny's ulterior motive. Bazin refers to this as a tension between the "pretext action" and the "real action," the latter being Fanny's sly attempt to extract from George any news whatsoever concerning Eugene and Isabel. And the pretext action being George's "childish gluttony" and the inconsequential dialogue.¹⁷

Uncle Jack enters the frame by walking down a flight of stairs in the right background. He immediately understands the "subtext" of their exchange and begins to tease Fanny by implying that Eugene's turn to fancy dress is an indication of his interest in her. Fanny begins to cry, and leaves the kitchen up the same background stairs. Dressed in black, with a white apron and matronly hairstyle, she cuts quite a pathetic figure, making this perhaps the first time we actually feel sympathy for her. The depth of field becomes more obvious now, as George, who stood up to follow Fanny to the stairs, speaks from the foot of the stairs in the right mid-ground, to Jack standing and then sitting at the table in the left foreground. The long take/scene ends with George slowly walking over to assume the exact same position as Fanny at the start of the shot: at the kitchen sink. George is in complete silhouette, an expression of how Fanny herself remains "invisible" to Eugene. This fact is underscored by Jack's words as George stands in place: "Fanny hasn't got much in her life. You know George, just being an aunt isn't...really the great career it may sometimes seem to be. I really don't know of anything much Fanny has got -except her feelings about

¹⁷Bazin stresses that dramatic or psychological editing would have underscored these two different meanings in the scene (not unlike the two cuts to Fredric March during the piano scene in *The Best Years of Our Lives*). The long take keeps these two strains alive and together, forcing the audience to discover for themselves the scene's true emotional core. The point remains, however, as noted to me by Victor Perkins, Bazin errs when he says that the "real action" is Fanny's attempt to "find out if George and his mother traveled with Eugene," because at this point in the film there was as yet no 'trip across Europe.' The event was to celebrate George's graduation. (*Orson Welles: A Critical View*, foreword by Francois Truffault (New York: Harper Row Books, 1978), 72.

Eugene.” This moment foreshadows how the lives of Fanny and George will be intertwined after the Ambersons’ economic collapse, with George perhaps joining Fanny as a sad, lonely bachelor. These implicit meanings are dependent on the mirroring effect of the two camera movements, the ‘spatial-associative’ position of the two characters, and the audience’s implicit awareness of the repetition.



A Metaphysics of Containment

This long take presents us with much more to consider. George and Fanny are sandwiched between a cluttered frame: the ceiling visible above them, a full table to their front, and pots and pans hanging from the ceiling to their back. The constant sound of rain and the chiaroscuro lighting add to the scene’s gothic feel. Bazin observed how Welles’ combined use of low angles, visible ceilings, and wide-angle lenses had a tendency to confine characters in their space: “The stretching of the image in depth, combined with the nearly constant use of low angles, produces throughout the film an impression of tension and conflict, as if the image might be torn apart.” Bazin accords a metaphysical aesthetic to this style: “No one can deny that there is a convincing affinity between this physical aspect of the image and the metaphysical drama of the story.”¹⁸ Bazin expands on this in the section justly called “A Style that Creates Meaning,” by saying that *découpage* in depth can have a greater

¹⁸Bazin, 74-75.

relationship to meaning than analytical *découpage*.¹⁹ However Bazin does not elaborate on what this metaphysical aspect may be; but perhaps it is this sense of confinement, present especially in the kitchen scene but elsewhere, that is a visual reflection of the Amberson's own self-imprisonment in their once glorious past (the past as entombment).

An integral formal aspect of this confinement is the static framing that allows us over four minutes to contemplate the claustrophobic space symbolizing George's closed universe. In discussing the use of the long take in *The Magnificent Ambersons* Perkins notes, "The long take (in fact the duration of any shot) gains its effect in part from the continuous availability of the cut, just as the static camera works as, in part, a refusal of mobility."²⁰ As the duration increases without a cut or camera movement, our gaze becomes aware of the fixed framing. This decision not to move the camera or cut into the shot places the audience in a parallel spectatorial confinement. We have, as per my comments in Chapter 3, a case of 'slow' temporal tonality being used to a thematic/artistic end. Welles attains this by building a tension between the nature and content of engagement which informs temporal tonality (in this case rapt dialogue, some plot/character revelation, Fanny's hysteria, and some variance in image scale, counterbalanced by a low intensity level and little kinetic energy). So that in the kitchen scene long take, the noted aspects of internal time (the cluttered frame, the static camera, the chiaroscuro lighting, the wide-angle lens effect) present

¹⁹In its full context the quote reads, "if there was a *metaphysics*, the old form of *découpage* couldn't contribute to its expression: the world of Ford and Capra can be defined on the basis of their scripts, their themes, the dramatic effects they have sought, the choice of scenes. It is not found in the *découpage* as such." André Bazin, *Orson Welles: A Critical View*, foreword by Francois Truffault (New York: Harper Row Books, 1978), 81. Again, as we saw in chapter five with respect to *Rope*, we see that for Bazin form does not always relate to a specific subject/content.

²⁰V.F. Perkins. *The Magnificent Ambersons*. (London: British Film Institute, 1999), 65.

us, thematically, with a metaphysics where personal time and memory overlap with historical time.²¹

‘Spatial’ Configuration & The Long Take: The Staircase

Another location where spatial confinement plays a noticeable function across a series of long takes is the Amberson house staircase. Welles uses the staircase as a specific spatial-temporal physical point where much of the film’s emotionally and sexually suppressed hysteria occurs. The sense of secrecy that ends the ball, expressed through hushed voices and gossip, cavernous spaces, fractured lighting, and silhouetted figures, continues in the first long take of the next scene (6, shot 91). This scene only spends a few brief moments on the staircase before moving onto the upper landing and hallway. But the sense of secrecy underscored by the confessional nature of the darkened hallway space is carried over into the several staircase scenes that appear throughout the balance of the film.

The next such staircase moment occurs in scene 15, following the Dinner scene. This single shot scene (shot 201) is a complex instance of camera choreography that firmly introduces the staircase as the mansion’s epicenter, where all transpires: dark family secrets, sexually induced hysteria, repressed Oedipal desires, portents of death, and class ascension and descent. At one point during the shot we see beautiful stained glass windows that render a ritualistic feel to the staircase space. It is during this long take that George first learns of his mother’s amorous history with

²¹In the original version of the film the historical process is pointedly brought forth. All the material dealing with the cause of the family’s economic decline was excised, including the concluding moments of the shot where George, looking out the kitchen window, sees that the front grounds of the mansion have been dug up and sold to maintain payment on the estate.

Eugene, which precipitates an hysteria not far removed from the best Fanny has to offer.²²

Scene 19 contains two more important staircase long takes (shots 226 and 227). The scene begins with the camera at a high angle atop the stairs. Jack returns to speak with Isabel after from having spoken to Eugene about the recent altercation between Eugene and George. The camera tilts up to the second landing, where we see George and then to the third landing, where Fanny is perched. The first words we hear are Fanny's: (in a hushed tone): "Well...I can just guess what that was about." Throughout these two intricate long takes George and Fanny manoeuvre for physical dominance and take turns trying to suppress their growing hysteria. With each new staircase scene the space becomes an increasingly contestable arena where the primal side of the characters are revealed.

Scene 25 contains the final long take to be situated on the staircase, though it is far less dramatic and visually baroque than the others. The emotional hysteria of the earlier staircase scenes is contained by the compositional formality (as it was in the punch bowl eight-shot). Eugene approaches the bottom of the stairs and insists that he be allowed to see the ill Isabel. Fanny walks down the staircase, handkerchief over her mouth, crying. A triangular composition appears at the bottom of the steps with George, Eugene, and Fanny. The camera pans and tilts up to frame Jack on the first landing as he reaffirms that it is best if he return later. As mentioned in passing during my discussion of the ball scene, many crucial narrative and thematic moments take place in long takes on or around the staircase.

²²Fittingly, since the source is also sexual: in George's case a repression of his Oedipal desires.

Social Time

Scene 12 contains a long take richly layered in the film's thematic rendering of social time. The scene begins with an establishing shot that implicitly suggests how the environmental effects of the new car age have already begun. The opening shot shows a car driving along the town's major street, manouevering a corner much as George did with his horse carriage in the opening scenes (the camera placement is similar as well). As the long take begins, the horse-drawn carriage carrying George and Lucy is riding through a gust of smoke left behind by the car of the previous shot. The car exhaust conspicuously hovers in George's face, echoing the fumes that blew into his face during the sleigh ride sequence.²³

As many have duly noted, the angle of the camera tracking alongside the horse-drawn carriage reveals subtle signs of the changing cityscape (ugly telephone wires and poles cutting the sky, and the reflection of the growing city in the storefronts). Again, the long take serves to present this for those who notice. But the center of interest remains Lucy and George, and the continuing saga of George's (unsuccessful) marriage proposals.²⁴ The scene concludes with dialogue that underscores the main ideological rift that keeps Lucy from accepting George. She again expresses concern about his profession: "You haven't decided on anything to do yet." George replies, "No, I dare say. I don't care any more for your father's ideals than he does for mine." The ideals that George is referring to are those of the new American upper class, a wealth attained through hard work, self-motivation, industry,

²³To note, George has a noticeable tan in this scene. I can't help but think that Welles is having some fun here by suggesting that his darkened face has been caused by the soot and grime of the ever enlarging city pollution!

²⁴The long take offers another nugget for observant viewers. The camera tracks slightly ahead of the carriage and pivots so as to face the carriage frontally, in doing so frankly exposing steel tracks on the left edge of the frame that are most probably those being used by Welles' camera!

and, above all, a respect for the value of time. In ideological terms, this new understanding focused on time as a commodity, something to save, control, manage, and exploit to one's advantage. In contrast, George's wealth is his by bloodline. Hence George and Lucy have drastically different views on what it means to "not waste time." The contempt that George holds for this new industrial notion of productive or constructive time is what, as much as anything, keeps Lucy and George apart (and perhaps the film's most forceful indicator of the interaction of personal and social time). Both classes, George's and Lucy's, must abide by their own rigid social codes. In her essay "Elitism in *The Magnificent Ambersons*" Beverly M. Kelley has the following to say in this regard:

...the responsibilities expected of the elite were rigorous and rigidly self-enforced. What George Minafer called "living an honorable life" was defined in what appears to be a highly restrictive moral code. For example, Isabel had to give up Eugene Morgan not merely because he crashed into the bass violin ... but because he had violated a code of behavior that forbade public drunkenness. Lucy Morgan refused to marry George Amberson Minafer because she realized that without work of some sort, he would be violating the code that prohibited idleness, even for the rich.²⁵

Time as Fading, Loss, and Death

There is a palpable sense of fading that permeates nearly every formal and textual level of *The Magnificent Ambersons*. Characters fade away into dark or misty backgrounds; words and incomplete sentences fade away into an aural darkness; the

²⁵Beverly Merrill Kelley, "Elitism in *The Magnificent Ambersons*." *Reelpolitik: political ideologies in the '30s and '40s films*, with John J. Pitney Jr., Craig R. Smith, and Herbert E. Gooch III, foreword by Steve Allen (Westport, Connecticut, London: Praeger, 1998), 36.

wind is often heard and once seems to carry Eugene and Lucy into the Amberson mansion; and all but five of the 37 scenes are joined by either fades or dissolves. As Dudley Andrew writes, "...unlike the simple pastness of the still photograph, Welles' films are simultaneously grand and gone; we are present to their fading."²⁶ In *The Magnificent Ambersons*, this sense of fading is an important aspect of the film's formal presentation of the gnawing forward of time, which leads to loss and death. The major societal loss incurred in the film is, of course, the passing of a family that represents an era in American history, the aristocratic, land-owning class, to be eclipsed by the new self-made, industrial bourgeoisie. The current of time also sparks other less dramatic, or epochal losses: those of love, romance, innocence, and the leisurely lifestyle afforded by aristocracy that is to be replaced by a burgeoning, capitalist economy founded on an ethos of productivity, efficiency, and industriousness. For the rest of this section I will concentrate on long take shots in which external and internal time elicit a sense of fading, loss and/or death.

Shot 228 of scene 20 is the first long take to impart the sense of loss that, at 53'18", will become the film's dominant emotion. As Eugene reads the desperate love letter he has written to Isabel, the camera dollies back away from his desk. Likewise, his voice fades out to a barely audible level as the image fades to black. His voice-over bleeds into the next shot of an empty hallway fading into view. This long take (39") maintains this sense of loss with the melancholic voice-over and cavernous, empty hallway. The voice-over specifically relates to the theme of age and generational difference: "I don't think he'll [George] change. At 21 or 22 so many things appear solid and permanent and terrible which 40 sees are nothing but disappearing miasma. Forty can't tell twenty about this. Twenty can find out only by

²⁶Dudley Andrew, *Film in the Aura of Art* (Princeton, New Jersey: University of Princeton Press, 1984), 170.

getting to be forty.” With the words reverberating, the shot dissolves to Isabel walking slowly in her darkened room, letter in hand.

Scenes 26-28 are structured as three successive long takes linked by the foreboding presence of death. Dudley Andrew refers to the middle long take, Isabel’s death scene, as “the film’s shortest and most experimental scene” (though, to nit pick, scene 35 is shorter at 17”). Andrew nicely evokes (though does not describe) the unusual quality that projects the shot’s sense of fading:

Never in the era of Hollywood cinema has a camera been so ungrounded, so at the mercy of hushed but whirling character emotions. The scene, like the characters, flies away from the camera, dispersing itself so that there is nothing to hold onto, nothing to photograph.²⁷

For the next scene (28), the camera remains static throughout the shot’s length (1’45”). It begins with the Major in medium close-up staring out of a black void directly into the camera. Welles’ omniscient voice-over hangs over the opening of the shot, cueing us to the Major’s state of mind: “And now, Major Amberson was engaged in the profoundest thinking of his life....” Flames flicker from an off-frame fireplace. The shot slowly brightens, but the dumbfounded expression on the Major’s face remains unchanged. Jack and George are heard off-frame asking questions about the house’s title deed, but the Major is too senile to understand or respond. Instead he seeps into a confused quasi-metaphysical, quasi-cosmic soliloquy:

It must be the sun. There wasn’t anything here but the sun in the first place...sun...The earth came out of the

²⁷Ibid., 160.

sun. We came out of the earth. So ...(voice slowly begins to fade)...whatever we are, it must have been the earth.....²⁸

As the voice completely fades away, so does the image to black, and with it the Major's life.

We can liken the Major in this scene to a modern variant of "Father Time," here surreally depicted as a mad philosopher-king. In his book *Studies in Iconology* Erwin Panofsky discusses how the image of time changed from that of a creative force in classical and medieval times, to time as a destructive force in the Renaissance period. Panofsky adds,

In other and even more numerous cases, however, the figure of Father Time is invested with a deeper and more precise meaning; he may act, generally speaking, either as Destroyer, or as a Revealer, or as a universal and inexorable power which through a cycle of procreation and destruction causes what may be called a cosmic continuity....²⁹



Father Time

The Major, "Revealer" rather than "Destroyer," sits in his darkened throne and interprets the social collapse around him in terms of a greater "cosmic continuity,"

²⁸In the original script version the Major's speech continues, as it does in the novel, and renders a more direct link between time, circularity, and loss: "We go back to the earth we came out of, so the earth goes back to the sun it came out of...and in a little while we'll all be back in the sun together. And time means nothing, just nothing at all. I wish..."

²⁹ "Father Time," *Studies in Iconology* (New York & Evanston: Harper & Row Publishers, 1939), 82.

trying to escape the clutches of linear time by cyclical imagery: "... The earth came out of the sun... and we came out of the earth...so...." His voice fades away into a cosmic oblivion as quickly and assuredly as his wealth and social standing.

Shots 258-260 link as three long takes comprising a little over 4 minutes of screen time. Shots 258 and 259 slowly dissolve into each other, so that for a brief moment the deathly faces of Isabel and the Major share a final, fleeting moment. The two shots are fused with a seamless graphic match of Isabel's head on her pillow and the Major's on his pillow. Isabel's death scene (shot 259) opens on a close-up of a character (the Major) who will in turn die in the next shot. Shot 260 maintains the graphic continuity by also opening on the shot of a deathly face (the Major's).³⁰

Following the deaths of Isabel and the Major, the film becomes increasingly concerned with loss. In most cases the long take combined with a recessionary movement helps to evoke this sense of loss. The scene following the train station scene, 'The Tale of the 'Loma-Nashah,' is evidence of this play with long take, time, memory, and loss. The main camera movement is an intermittent backward dolly following Eugene and Lucy as they spend an idyllic, yet sad afternoon in the garden. The camera's low angle position opens up the top portion of the frame to the sky, making this one of the few instances where the low angle does not produce the sense of an enclosed space. However, this apparent sense of freedom is used ironically, since the fable Lucy recounts to Eugene is a disguised reference of her feelings for George. Hence even though the long take contains a sense of lyrical serenity, it is

³⁰The shift to a secular, linear, future-thinking culture, which according to Donald M. Lowe resulted in the "epistemic order of development-in-time," also changed societal attitudes toward death. Lowe writes, "Previously, ritual functioned as a preparation for the dying....But in bourgeois society, there was more concern for the ones left behind....The helpless grief of those left behind expressed a sense that death was now the ultimate barrier which could no longer be overcome" (*History of Bourgeois Perception*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982, 18, 48. We see such an attitude toward death in *The Magnificent Ambersons*, with the different ways death affects members of the Amberson family. Perhaps this is most pointedly expressed in Wilbur's funeral scene, where the camera remains on the faces of the living, and ends on a striking close-up of Fanny's pained face.

underscored by the sad sense of loss felt by Lucy (for George) and Eugene (for Isabel). Hence the recessional dolly back, though not as obviously figurative of loss as certain other shots, does express loss and pained memory. The final lines of dialogue give evidence of this:

Eugene: What was the name of that grove?

Lucy: 'They-could...'

Eugene: No, the Indian name, I mean.

Lucy: Oh. Mola-Haha. (They laugh together.)

Eugene: Mola-Haha. That wasn't the name you said.

Lucy: Oh, I've forgotten.

Eugene: So you have. Perhaps you remember the chief's name better?

Lucy: I don't. (Eugene puts his arm around Lucy)

Eugene: I hope some day you can forget it.

Though not as oppressive as in later scenes, the sense of loss achieves a particular bittersweet emotion because of this tension between lyricism (wonderful daughter/father moment, the intimacy, the garden setting) and the underscored sense of accumulative loss.

"The Cold Boiler" scene that follows contains perhaps the film's greatest example of recessional movement through space/time as an expression of loss. In comparison to the previous scene, the loss here is material (furniture, money, class, social status) rather than emotional (love). As Fanny and George discuss their financial ruin, Fanny crumbles to the floor, resting up against the shutdown boiler. Eventually, George clasps her by the arm and forces her up. With a firm grip on Fanny, George begins to walk backward through two doorways, the unevenly lit reception hall, and into the near empty front parlor, where white sheets can be seen draped across the remaining furniture. At this point the camera, which has been

dolly back in front of them, pans left as George and Fanny walk away from the camera into the chiaroscuro of the cavernous room. The long take, by slowly unraveling the empty, dark spaces of the once regal mansion, brings home the stark reality of the Amberson's economic and social collapse.

Three scenes later (scene 34) comes another expressive recession long take shot. The scene begins in total darkness. The camera dollies back from an extreme close-up of the back of George's head, as if literally pulling out of his shocked psyche. The voice-over underscores the theme of loss: "tomorrow everything will be gone." As the camera slowly cranes back and up we see George, in complete silhouette, kneeling at his empty mother's bed, praying, "God forgive me, God forgive me." With the camera now at a long distance from George, and still moving back ever so slowly, the shot fades to black.

The film concludes with a final recession long take, but one that is at odds with its careful evolution. The camera looks down a hospital corridor. Eugene exits from George's room. Fanny appears from an off-frame corridor right and, instead of going into the room to visit with George, walks off with Eugene arm-in-arm toward the camera. The camera dollies back with them, stopping for good once Fanny and Eugene are framed in a close-up low angle. This recession long take is meant to express a sense of resolution, of pulling out of the diegesis, rather than the sense of loss with which it has become associated through the latter part of the film. This difference is only one of many cues that mark this scene as being visually and emotionally inconsistent with the rest of the film.³¹ The scene suggests that the passing of time has led to an emotional peace between Lucy, George, Eugene, and

³¹This is one of the scenes that was either re-shot or re-written by RKO against Welles' wishes. This particular scene was written by Robert Wise, shot by Russell Metty, scored by Roy Webb, and directed by Freddie Fleck.

Isabel's spirit. It even goes as far as hint at the possibility of a future union between Fanny and George (they walk off arm-in-arm, with a calm, joyful expression on their faces). However, this sense of optimism for the future is in complete disharmony with the emotional timbre the film has so carefully developed. An important aspect of this emotional timbre is, as I have demonstrated with my emphasis on the film's employment of the long take, the visual and thematic association of time with loss.³²

Deleuzian 'Sheets of the Past'

There are many examples in *The Magnificent Ambersons* where, as Gilles Deleuze notes, "depth of field creates a certain type of direct time-image that can be defined by memory...."³³ In this case the time-image contains different moments in time (narrative or symbolic) layered over each other through various formal and textual elements in a depth of field or deep focus shot. Though Deleuze does not foreground duration, in the examples I will offer, the durative aspect of the shot is as important as any other formal element in the constitution of the time-image. One of the finest examples of "sheets of the past" is the train station scene (29), yet another single long take shot scene (1'53"). The scene has George seeing off Jack, who is leaving for a political post in Washington. The static and tight framing is used to a dramatic effect. The two bodies and the large pillar between them conceal the background space from view. Only the echoing off-frame sound of train bells and bustling people give us a hint of the train depot's cavernous size. George remains

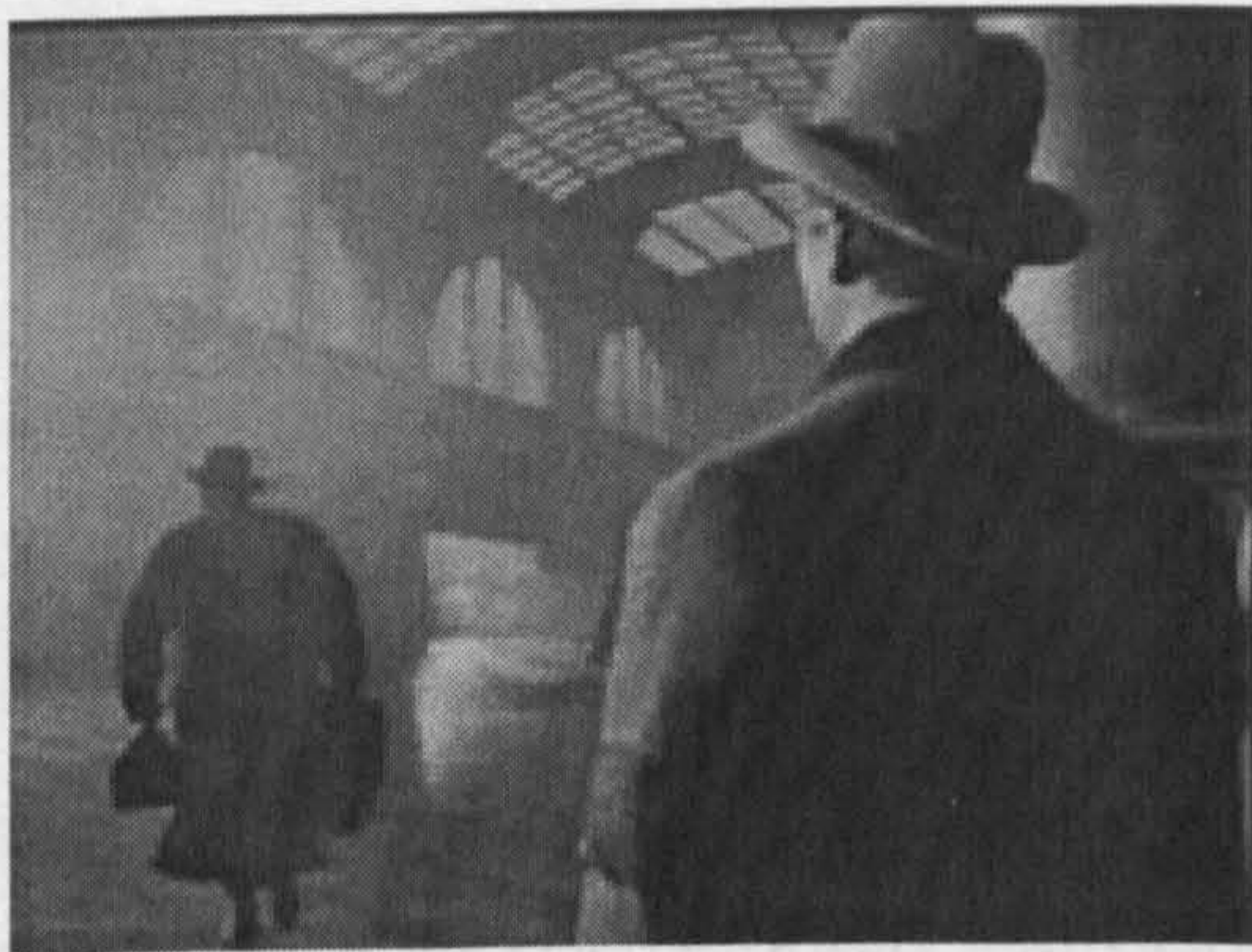
³²Many critics have expounded on different variations of this theme: an obsession with the past/childhood; an obsession with death; or as critic William Johnson outlines in the title of his essay, "Orson Welles: Of Time and Loss," *Film Quarterly* 21/1 (Fall, 1967): 13-24. None, however, linking this thematic expression to the long take.

³³*Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: The Athlone Press, 1989), 109.

uncharacteristically silent throughout the scene, while Jack reflects philosophically on the past and memory:

Once I stood where we're standing now to say goodbye to a pretty girl....We knew we wouldn't see each other again for almost a year. I thought I couldn't live through it. She stood there crying - don't even know where she lives now.... If she ever thinks of me she probably imagines I'm still dancing in the ballroom of the Amberson mansion. She probably thinks of the mansion as still beautiful. Still the finest house in town. Ah, life and money both behave like loose quicksilver in a nest of cracks. When they're gone, you can't say where, or what the devil you did with them.

The off-screen sound of a train entering the station becomes louder. Jack turns to leave and the camera pans slightly to the left to reframe Jack as he jogs off into the far background. As the camera reframes, the space opens up dramatically to reveal a mist-filled spatial void, a wide-angle image that evokes the past and memory, a



Deleuzian “sheet of the past.” As Jack trots off into the background he is *metaphorically* moving in time as well as space, into the past he so lovingly recreated to George, recalling George’s earlier dance step back in space, and Jack’s own dialogue exchange with Eugene during the ball scene: “My gosh, old times certainly are starting all over again.” (And from this point on Jack is never seen again and lives on only as a memory.) Deleuze makes this similar point in reference to the scene of

Susan's suicide attempt in *Citizen Kane*: "The hero acts, walks and moves; but it is the past that he plunges himself into and moves in: time is no longer subordinate to movement, but movement to time." Or in reference to another scene from the same film: "Hence in the great scene where Kane catches up in depth with the friend he will break with, it is in the past that he himself moves; this movement *was* the break with the friend."³⁴

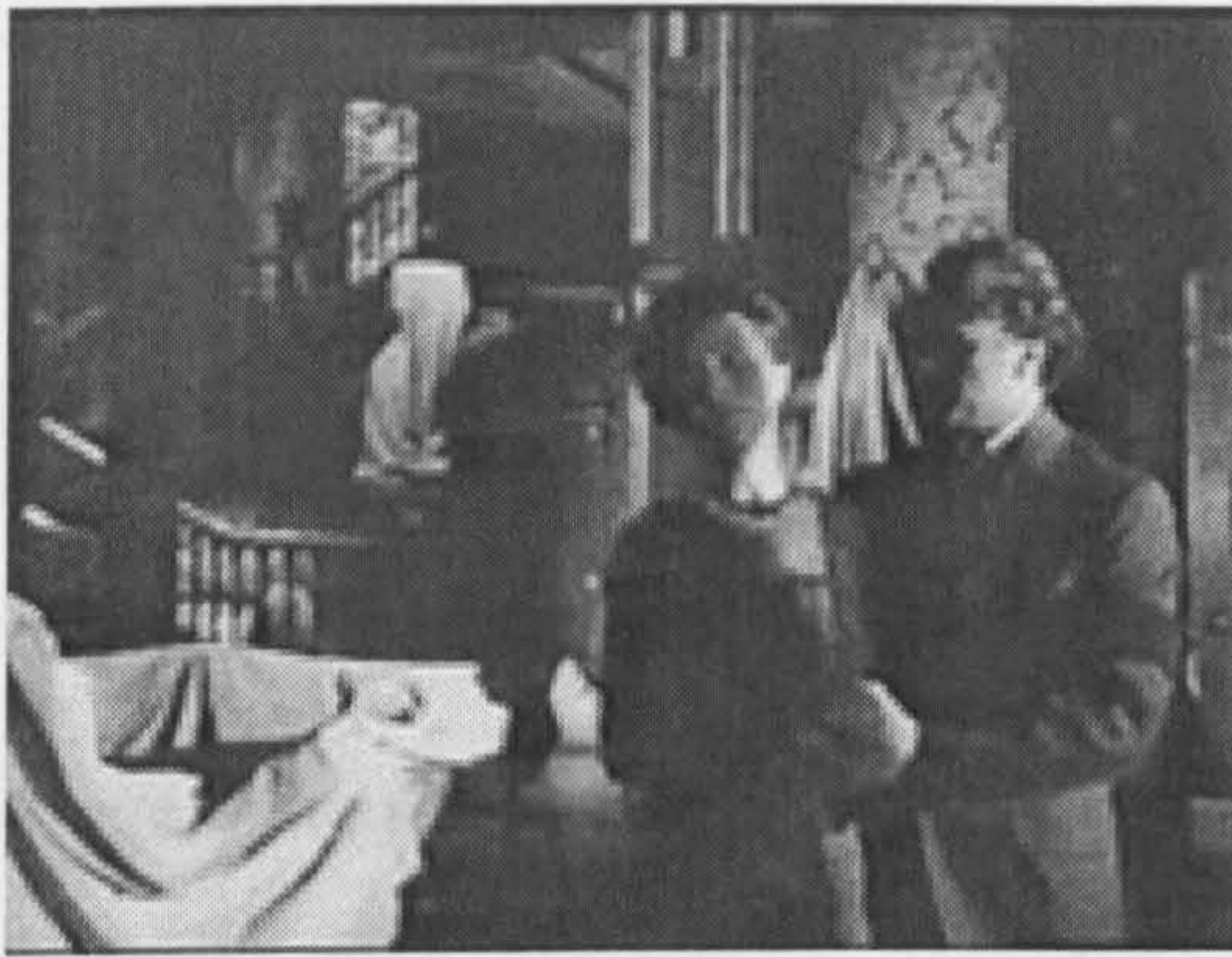
As in Isabel's death scene, a small camera movement both dynamizes and emotionalizes space. Only in this case the drama is heightened by the durative stillness that precedes the movement. The "block" of time presented through the long take is as important as the depth in constituting the Deleuzian sheet of past:

The new depth...directly forms a region of time, a region of past which is defined by *optical* aspects or elements borrowed from interacting planes. It is a set of non-localizable connections, always from one plane to another, which constitutes the region of the past or the *continuum of duration* [my emphasis]."³⁵

The Magnificent Ambersons contains many other scenes where depth of field is implicated with or evokes memory in one form or another. Take, as an example, the "Cold Boiler" scene. Visible in the dark background for an instant during the recessionary dolly shot through the reception hall/front parlor is the majestic staircase, the pride of the once glorious Amberson mansion. The foreground space and the

³⁴Ibid, 106.

³⁵Ibid., 108.



background staircase call to mind the memory of the previous heated encounters between Fanny and George, as well as the glorious ball. The combined image of the covered furniture and the staircase evokes a sheet of the past, with the depth of field constituting a time-image where past and present co-exist. The emotional power of this image derives from the way our memory of the house's past (recollection memory, or "virtual image") colors the "actual image" we see (cold, dark house, covered furniture, empty staircase, etc.).

In other cases a slightly different type of memory is called upon, spectatorial memory. For example, in the earlier kitchen scene, where the full meaning of the scene is dependent on the spectator's ability to remember the mise-en-scène placement of Fanny and then George in the exact same physical space (shorter-term memory). Whereas in the cold boiler scene longer term memory is called upon (the glory days represented in the earlier ball scene). Admittedly, the train station example is a more diffuse case of the Deleuzian 'sheets of the past' because its meaning is dependent on a figurative-interpretative reading of the cavernous space. Which is not the case with the other instances of depth of field and memory, which bring into play concrete narrative and descriptive instances of memory, or dependence on audience memory.

The Long Take and Scene Construction

In this section I will make some general comments on long take practice as it relates to the film's overall narrative structure based on observed patterns of long take usage. I am specifically looking for patterns in how and when the long take is used in scene construction. Although long take pattern does not in itself tell us much about visual style, it does help us understand how the decision to use a long take can relate to a film's overall structure, and, secondly, the extent to which the use of the long take relates to a film's overall style.³⁶

By looking at *The Magnificent Ambersons* as a whole I can detect two general patterns with respect to the long take:

- 1) that the film's ASL slows down as the film progresses, as does, concurrently, the film's overall rhythm
- 2) that a large majority of the long takes occur at the beginning or end of scenes.

Many viewers and critics have remarked that the rhythm of the film slows down considerably in the second half. None, however, have supported this with textual *and* statistical evidence. A variety of statistical breakdowns corroborates this observation (though statistical analysis on its own can never be a definitive barometer of pace and rhythm). To begin with, the first half of the film (scenes 1-14, 43'45") contains 200 shots, while the second half of the film (scenes 15-37, 42'19") contains only 84 shots (ASL = 13", ASL = 30"). After Isabel's death, from scene 28 onward, the ASL slows

³⁶However, my formal-textual approach to the temporal (external/internal time) qualities of the long take inevitably leads to some discussion of long take visual style (depth of field, movement, lighting, etc.).

down even more to 41". This slowing down of the ASL from 13" to 41" through the course of the film represents a drastic change, and would no doubt be palpable to most viewers. Although the first and second halves of the film have approximately the same number of long takes, 24 and 26, the takes become much longer and less mobile in the second half. For example, the number of long takes over 60" doubles from 8 to 16, including one sustained period of successive long takes that consumes 10'16" of screen time (shots 258-263). Hence this demonstrates how simply listing the *number* of long takes (24 to 26) does not reveal how the long takes evolve to support textual meaning. For statistical analysis (CSA) to be an effective barometer of meaning, they must be placed within a rigorous and broad analysis (complete statistical analysis, temporal tonality, philosophical/thematic context, etc.).

For example, this progression toward a slower cutting rate can be seen as a formal and thematic match to the film's narrative. Firstly, the death of Isabel and the Major, two important figureheads of the Amberson family, gives some narrative impetus to the stately, somber rhythm that marks the film's second half. Historical and social time is inexorably linked to the personal and financial tragedy that befalls the Amberson family: they are unable or unwilling to adjust to the "changing times." During the Amberson's heyday time passed quickly, filled with social outings, balls, and leisure activity. Time was light and joyful (no more apparent than in the quickly cut, wintry sleigh ride scene). After these two deaths, time becomes weighted with the stress of financial and material loss. Time, for both George and Fanny, drags toward an uncertain future. The longer takes that dominate the final quarter of the film give visual shape to this change by giving more "weight" to time, especially in the long takes with little kinetic energy (shots 250, 258, 260, 261, 262, 263).

The breakdown of the film's many sequence shots is another striking statistical confirmation of the film's slackening pace. There are an incredibly high number of scenes in *The Magnificent Ambersons*, twelve, that are composed of one single long take, what is commonly referred to as a sequence shot (see statistical table for details). This accounts for 32% of the film's total scenes. However, 10 of the 12 sequence shots occur after the mid-way point (after scene 14), and many of these contain either very little movement, or very slow character or camera movement. These slow moving, single shot scenes, especially in contrast to the quickening pace of the earlier scenes, contribute a great deal to the film's rhythmic slowdown.

I will now make some general observations on the second noted pattern: that a large majority of the long takes occur at either the beginning or end of scenes. There are 50 long takes in *The Magnificent Ambersons*. Sixty-two percent (31) of these are either the first or last shot of a scene. This tells us that there is a strong correlation between scene structure and the use of the long take. That is, a long take is often used to draw a viewer into a scene or render it a sense of closure. This structural component of the long take is also evident, as a general rule, in films as a whole. For example, there are a great number of films that begin or end with an emphatic, and in many cases, extremely lengthy and complex long take. A "short" list includes: *The Crowd* (1927), *Scarface* (1932), *Poil de carotte* (1932), *La Belle Equipe* (1936), *Hotel du Nord* (1938), *De Mayerling á Sarajevo* (1940), *Les portes de la nuit* (1946), *The Third Man* (1949), *La Ronde* (1950), *Le Plaisir* (1952), *Touch of Evil* (1957), *Sandra* (1965), *The Passenger* (1975), *Absolute Beginners* (1982), *Nostalghia* (1982), *The Sacrifice* (1986), *Sister, Sister* (1987), *Goodfellas* (1990), *Postcards from the Edge* (1990), *Bonfire of the Vanities* (1990), *The Sheltering Sky* (1990), *And Life Goes On* (1991), *The Player* (1992), *Through the Olive Trees* (1994), *Ed Wood* (1994), *Beyond*

the Clouds (1995), *The Big Night* (1996), *The Bird Cage* (1996), *One Night Stand* (1997), *Boogie Nights* (1997), *The River* (1997), *Snake Eyes* (1998), *Felicia's Journey* (1999), and *Kadosh* (1999).

The ASL alone does not tell us how the long take relates to a particular film's overall narrative. Neither does the ASL alone reveal anything about a long take's visual style, treatment of internal time, or temporal tonality. As a critical tool the ASL gains effectiveness when used as part of a complete analysis (CSA), which includes a scene by scene breakdown. For example, when looking at *The Magnificent Ambersons* "on paper" (scene-by-scene breakdown), we see that there is a relative balance between scenes that rely to a large extent on the long take (20) and scenes that do not (17). The chart below breaks down the scenes accordingly, with the ASL, number of shots, number of long takes, and total screen-time length noted next to the scene number:

Scene#	ASL	<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (20)</u>		Scene Length
		# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
4.	30.8"	21	9	10'48"
9.	2'25"	2	1	4'30"
10.	1'45"	1	1	1'45"
12.	1'12.50"	2	1	2'25"
13.	48"	1	1	48"
15.	2'54"	1	1	2'54"
16.	1'16"	1	1	1'16"
19.	40.5"	4	2	2'42"
20.	51"	3	3	2'34"
22.	52.5"	4	1	3'30"
23.	1'12.50"	2	1	2'25"
26.	1'52"	1	1	1'52"
27.	27"	1	1	27"
28.	1'46"	1	1	1'46"
29.	1'53"	1	1	1'53"
30.	2'54"	1	1	2'54"
31.	44.4"	5	3	3'42"
32.	1'37"	1	1	1'37"
34.	1'06"	1	1	1'06"
37.	1'37"	1	1	1'37"
Total Time: 52'31" (61 % of total screen time)				

<u>Scenes Dominated by Editing (13)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
1.	10.6"	11	1	1'57"
2.	8.6"	23	1	3'20"
3.	6.0"	33	1	3'19"
6.	16.5"	13	2	3'35"
7.	4.7"	60	0	4'45"
11.	11.6"	3	0	35"
14.	10"	24	3	4'02"
17.	5.8"	8	0	47"
18.	7.6"	13	2	1'39"
23.	10.3"	14	2	2'25"
26.	12"	3	0	36"
35.	5"	9	0	45"
37.	17"	1	0	17"
Total Time: 28'02" (33% of total screen time)				

<u>Mixed Style Scenes (4)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
5.	20.5"	2	1	41"
8.	18.7"	4	2	1'15"
27.	32.8"	4	1	2'11"
38.	21"	4	1	1'24"
Total Time: 5'31" (6% of total screen time)				

This use of the long take, which I call dialectical, is common to directors who have no particular allegiance to the long take or montage, but move freely between the two styles. Further remarks will be drawn in my conclusion, but at this point a scene by scene, shot-by-shot breakdown bears important definitional (and critical) value for films with an ASL in the range of *The Magnificent Ambersons* (18"). [For, as we will see with the radical long take practice, when a film has an extremely slow ASL, the long take no longer exists at a dialectical level with editing because every, or nearly every, scene is dominated by the long take.] For example, a film composed of 284 shots can have an ASL of 18", but with only a handful of extremely long takes. Or a film can have an ASL of 18" yet not contain a single long take, with every shot in the 12"-24" range (though this is theoretically possible I seriously doubt any such

film exists). In both cases, the film would feel different from *The Magnificent Ambersons* and would not exhibit a dialectical long take practice.

A scene by scene, shot-by-shot breakdown would bring to light such stylistic anomalies or quirks. For a film to ‘feel’ dialectical it is necessary that a certain percentage of the film’s shots be long takes, and that there be a certain ratio between percentage of scenes dominated by editing, long take, and mixed mode. The length of the long takes and the number of short shots can also help in determining long take practice. In addition to the above scene breakdown figures, in *Ambersons* 18% of the shots are long takes (50/284), and 47% of the long takes (23) are over 60”. But to arrive at any general conclusions in this respect, there would have to be comparisons to other films with a similar ASL. Although I will offer some comparative figures in my conclusion, a thorough, more conclusive analysis based on a much broader test sampling is beyond the scope of this thesis. Though much more can be said about long take and scene structure, my goal here will be to note the broad parameters of how these three types of long take practice can relate to narrative structure.³⁷

³⁷For example, though the strategy of opening or closing a film with an emphatic long take has a tradition dating back to early film history (*The Crowd* 1927), today’s incarnation has a complex relationship to competing visual entertainment such as virtual reality environments, computer games and computer generated imagery, the internet, “techno-dome” amusement parks, etc. Recent innovations in camera apparatus technology (steadicams, cranes, digi-cameras, computer operated camera systems, on-set video assistant playback systems, etc.) has made this effect considerably easier to achieve. I refer to this as the “Scorsese Effect”: extended steadicam shots that follow or lead characters through a location. For example, the camera that follows characters in their milieu in *Raging Bull*, *Goodfellas* and *Casino*. This has been copied recently with the opening steadicam shot into the discotheque in *Boogie Nights*, into the drag bar in *The Bird Cage*, and the boxing arena in *Snake Eyes*. In these cases the moving long take immediately establishes character identity in relation to their work/play space. The kinetic movement at the beginning of the film viscerally grabs the spectator and immediately places them into the filmic space, even before any sense of story has been established (what Raymond Durgnat has called “energy realism,” quoted by Andrew Martin in “Mise-en scène is Dead, or The Expressive, The Excessive, The Technical and The Stylish.” *Continuum*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (1992): 89. This type of extended long take (which Le Fanu typifies as the “flamboyant and kinetic” type, is as much, if not more, spectacle than introduction to story, mood, character, or location. In some cases the shot signals Big Budget & Big Technology. Unfortunately, this easy recourse to technique often results in the victory of flash over imaginative and/or subtle mise-en-scène.

Conclusion

The Magnificent Ambersons deals with the social effects of industrial progress on a member of the American aristocratic class, the Amberson family. The family's social and economic collapse is expressed through its inability to adjust to the "changing times." My concentration on the long take revealed the way the theme of social time informs the film's form and content in many richly textured ways. For example, the long takes in the ball scene, with their treatment of space, framing, and varied movements, take us through a range of emotions that represent how personal time is interrelated with social time. At once these long takes evoke the grandness, majesty and stateliness of the Ambersons and their aristocratic class. On the other hand, as if to embody the film's ambivalent and multi-layered attitude toward its social and economic tensions, the long takes harbor subtle yet suggestive nods toward the unsettled Amberson future.³⁸

This sense of social and economic confinement is expressed through the long take's ability to progressively register a sense of loss, stagnation, and death. This was revealed by close textual-formal analysis of both the long take's external and internal time, and the relationship between the long take and the film's overall structure. By looking at these interacting components I was able to note the film's progression toward a slower ASL and a less dynamic temporal tonality (more one-shot scenes, longer takes, less kinetic camera and character activity). These are elements which seem to grow out of specific story events (deaths to major characters, economic ruin)

³⁸These are expressed through the sexual tensions between Fanny/Eugene/Isabel and Eugene/Wilbur; the generational conflict expressed through the coupling of Eugene and Isabel and Lucy and George; the shifts in lighting from bright and even, to dark and fragmentary, and the symbolic movements through spaces that reflect attitudinal sensibilities to progress and change.

and the film's general thematic and philosophical thrust). Certain thematic, narrative and philosophical meanings were also aided by the use of key critical-theoretical terms borrowed from Gilles Deleuze.

Tentative, exploratory comments were drawn concerning the relationship between long take practice and scene construction. Most telling, that a majority of the long takes occur at the beginning or end of scenes. However, further comparison with other films of similar average shot length would be required before any general, conclusive remarks can be made in this respect. This chapter also demonstrates that statistical analysis has the potential to be an effective critical tool if used within the context of a broader analytical project (CSA). In my case, this includes average shot length (ASL), range of long take shot length, shot-by-shot and scene-by-scene breakdown; looking at the relationship between ASL and scene structure; and, most importantly, conducting close analysis of a long take's internal time to understand how temporal tonality operates across the film. The long take practice used in *The Magnificent Ambersons* is what I call dialectical. In a dialectical practice the long take, while an important formal and structural element, is not used exclusively across the whole film. This is evidenced in *The Magnificent Ambersons* by the many scenes not dominated by the long take (17).

Chapter 8: *Ugetsu* (Synthetic Long Take Practice)

- Introduction: Movement & Circularity
- Falls and Rises (The Abject and the Elevated)
- Movement/Journey Into Supernatural Time
 - Supernatural Time Meets Natural/Real Time*
- The Homecoming Scene and Automorphic/Homomorphic Time
- Momentous Time
- Circularity: To End or to Begin?
- The Long Take and Scene Construction
- Conclusion

CHAPTER 8

UGETSU (SYNTHETIC LONG TAKE PRACTICE)

Introduction: Movement & Circularity

In this case study chapter, I will pay particular attention to scenes and moments where the long take and time interact at the level of theme, meaning, form and structure. *Ugetsu*, belonging to the *jidai-geki* genre (period costume film), is set during the civil war-striven medieval Japan. The story concerns four central characters, husband and wife Genjuro (Masayuki Mori) and Miyagi (Kinuyo Tanaka), who have a young son named Genichi (Ichisaburo Sawamura), Genjuro's sister Ohama (Mitsuko Mito), and her husband Tobei (Sakae Ozawa). The two families, potters (Genjuro/Miyagi) and farmers (Tobei/Ohama) by trade, live side-by-side in rural Japan. The wives begin to worry when they learn that the civil war may encroach upon their village. The husbands, however, are stimulated by the war. Genjuro becomes greedy when he learns that "business has been booming ever since Shibata's army came to town." And Tobei, Genjuro's younger brother-in-law, harbors dreams of becoming a great samurai warrior. Oblivious to their wives' warnings, the two men take hold of their material desires and set forth (with Ohama) on a journey that will lead them and their families to horror, shame, and tragedy. Miyagi, left behind to fend for herself and her son, is ambushed and killed by a gang of soldiers. Ohama, stranded from Tobei, is raped and driven to a life of prostitution. Tobei succumbs to murdering a distinguished warrior to attain the status of samurai. And Genjuro becomes unwittingly lured into an unholy tryst with a ghost princess, Lady Wakasa.

Before getting to my textual examples, I will lay out the two overarching formal patterns which support the backbone of my close textual analysis: movement and circularity. The detailed nuances of how these two concepts inform time and the long take will become fully apparent only through exegesis. But as a starting point, I will propose that the film's theme¹ of the moral fall from a state of social unity is directly expressed through vertical movement, both of characters and camera, while time is often expressed *through/as* movement. In turn, a resolution to the moral fall is achieved through circularity and within a conception of cyclical time. In fact, *Ugetsu* is structured around many gestures, actions, and movements that are repeated or echoed in later scenes. This doubling effect underscores the film's philosophical theme of *mujo*² –the impermanence of things- within a world shaped by a cyclical view of time. I will demonstrate through textual analysis how this conception of cyclical time infuses the film's form at nearly every level: narrative structure, theme and meaning, camera movement, character blocking, and repetitions or doublings of scenes, events, dialogue, actions, and movements. My use of movement, therefore, is to be taken in its broadest sense to encompass character movement, camera movement, and the progression of the narrative as it evolves and enfolds upon itself. In the philosophical sense, this shows the influence of Bergson's (and other philosophers') belief that movement can be seen as an expression of time, if not a category of time itself.³

¹ Needless to say, a film as rich and textured as *Ugetsu* has several themes and meanings. I make no claim that the one I am outlining here is the 'right' one, let alone the only one.

² *Mujo* is defined by Keiko I. McDonald as the Buddhist concept of "the mutability of all earthy [sic] phenomena." Keiko I. McDonald, ed., *Ugetsu* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 15.

³ As Bergson argued in his discussion of Zeno's Paradoxes, time and movement share the quality of being indivisible.

Applied to my textual analysis, I understand this to mean that movements, whether of character or camera, gain meaning and expression within the filmic context (and not a priori). For example, in the famous long take where Genjuro returns home after his journey, the simple movement of Genjuro and the camera does not explain what transpires temporally (and spatially), with Miyagi appearing in the space that only moments ago was empty and lifeless. The movement is an expression of the shift that has taken place from real time to supernatural (or dream) time, in a sense the movement is the shift itself. But its full meaning is understood within the context of prior events in the film (our accumulative experience). There are many such 'movements' in *Ugetsu* where the temporal (or metaphysical) meaning is explainable through movement understood in the broad filmic context.

Falls & Rises (The Abject and the Elevated)

Mizoguchi uses vertical movement, both of characters and camera, to symbolically represent the moral and/or emotional "fall" from a state of social unity (humility, familial unity, and individual dignity). For each of the central characters, this fall is visually represented and underscored by a series of physical falls. In many cases this is accompanied, followed, or preceded by a physical rise, or its attempt. An often-important component to these rises and falls is a camera crane movement. It is not surprising to learn from an interview with the film's cinematographer Kazuo Miyagawa on the *Ugetsu* laserdisc that, "We used the crane about 70% of the time."

The use of the crane, which allows easy maneuvering for up/down tilting movements, is matched by a numerous amount of falls/rises by characters. It is impossible to say which came first, the decision to use the crane so extensively, or the

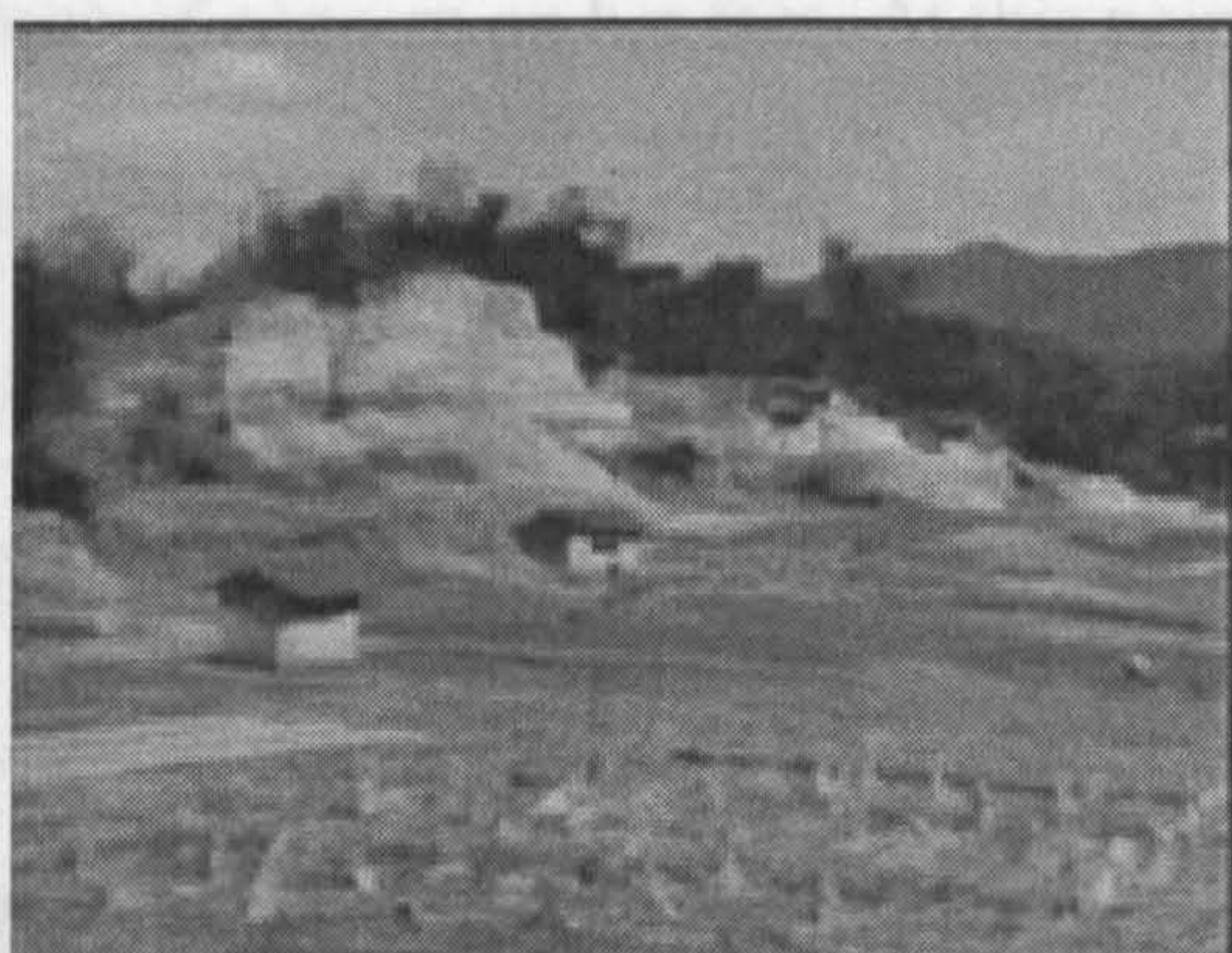
script that called for so many physical rises and falls, but the two are obviously well-matched. Considering only the major and minor players (Genjuro, Miyagi, Genichi, Tobei, Ohama, Lady Wakasa, Ukon the Nurse), I counted a remarkable 60 plus instances where characters rise and/or descend. And on many of these occasions the physical movements are accompanied by appropriate crane movements.

Is it, however, necessary that these falls are aligned with the long take? Strictly speaking no, since some 'falls' do occur in shorter shots. However, a statistical analysis reveals a far stronger correlation between the falls and the long take than exists across the film as a whole. The 'falls' occur across 55 shots. Thirty-eight of these shots are long takes, for an increased percentage compared to the overall film of 26% (43% to 69%). The ASL also jumps from 29" across the whole film to 41.5" during the 'fall' shots. Of these 55 shots only 6 shots are under 10 seconds (11% compared to 16% across the whole film). Hence even though there is no conclusive link between the falls and the long take, a CSA demonstrates a very strong structural correlation between the falls and the use of the long take; which is in large part because the passage of real time allows the 'falls' to attain drama and intensity through the accumulation of continuous long take time. Also, in many cases, the long take becomes necessary strictly for pragmatic, geographical purposes because the falls take place across a sizeable span of space.

The majority of these falls/rises do not signal any extraordinary meaning or affect. Many can be explained by the mere fact that most quotidian events in medieval Japan were performed on the ground (such as eating, sitting, and sleeping). But neither can this explain the inordinate use of these movements, or their overall cumulative effect on the viewer. Which is why I argue that, collectively, these movements are linked thematically to the film's philosophical core: the "fall" of

humanity from a state of earthly goodness and familial unity (caused by succumbing to material desires). Firstly, this formal-thematic reading is underscored by the fact that the falls are often designed to produce a dramatic effect. For example, many of the falls occur with a character in such a weakened condition that they can not stand on their own two feet (limp body), yet without an apparent or outward physical justification for this weakened state. In these instances, the falls can be seen as an external manifestation for the characters' loss of internal spiritual or moral control or resolve. Secondly, CSA corroborates a strong correlation between the falls and Mizoguchi's use of the long take.

The film's rigorous dependence on the crane and physical movement begins with the opening shot of the film: a crane/panning shot that begins with the general (village farm community, with farmers in the extreme distance toiling the land), then cranes left by a tree, past two huts (belonging to Genjuro's and Tobei's families), and down to the village street where Genjuro, Miyagi, and Genichi are seen loading their cart. This downward movement not only initiates the importance of the recurring 'fall' in its physical gesture/movement, but the thematic metaphor for the human fall from social unity. The two off-screen gunshots that we hear near the end of the shot and that draw the undivided attention of Genjuro and Miyagi, already foreshadows the context which informs Genjuro's ill-advised decision to leave his family (the encroaching civil war and Genjuro's desire to profit from it). Thematically, this opening long take encompasses the film's eventual philosophical scale reduction from the social (the larger farming community), to the familial, to the individual (Genjuro's desire of fame and monetary gain over Miyagi's familial wishes). Hence while this opening 48" long take seems, on the surface, to be a conventional establishing shot, it contains far more meaning when seen within the context of the complete film.



Beginning and ending of opening shot

This will be fleshed out later, but in short, it operates as such in the way it initiates the emotional and physical sense of a fall through the expression of a downward camera movement; the way it forms a circularity with the ending and places their plight within nature's cyclical temporal order, and the way the movement expresses a shift from the social whole, to the family unit, to the individual.

Shot 12, one of the film's longer takes (1'22"), establishes the familial idyll from which Genjuro and Tobei will fall when corrupted by their material desires. Miyagi tries on a dress that Genjuro has bought for her, an image that will be repeated twice, once again by Miyagi in Genjuro's daydream, and later by the ghost Princess Lady Wakasa. Miyagi prepares dinner for her husband and son. The camera reframes left and tilts down to maintain compositional three-shot harmony of the idyll family: (father) Genjuro, (wife) Miyagi, and (son) Genichi. The eventual disruption of this idyll family is foreshadowed in the following long take (shot 13, 1'25"). Miyagi is framed in the left foreground, trying to convince Genjuro to remain home in event that the impending civil war reach their village. Genjuro shrugs off Miyagi's warning, noting instead that war will lead to "booming business". While Genjuro speaks these

words Miyagi, favored in the left foreground, listens attentively and with a telling look of concern on her face. At this point Ohama enters the room, and the camera reframes left for a four-shot. It pans left to follow Ohama as she looks out the window at her husband Tobei, returning from his groveling visit to Lord Niwa's temple (the first instance of a character fall). Tobei enters, crouched in shame like a puppy dog who has strayed too far from home. Ohama pushes him to the ground.



Tobei's 1st Dramatic Long Take 'Fall'

In these two consecutive long takes of roughly equal length, through framing, composition, blocking, and acting, we see both the social and familial harmony and the seed of its eventual destruction (the war, Genjuro's plan to profit from it, Miyagi's fear of being separated from Genjuro, and Tobei's dream of becoming a warrior).

Miyagi's concern over Genjuro's behavior, hinted at in the previous scene, comes to the fore in the following scene. The opening long take of scene 6 establishes the work ethic that Genjuro loses sight of in the face of greed. It again gives us a glimpse of the familial harmony, a summit point with which to compare the eventual 'fall'. The opening two shots also place the growing tension between Miyagi and Genjuro within a circular motif that will return with great force in the film's final scene. The camera is static with Genjuro seated right profile in the left foreground and



Miyagi in the right middle ground facing the camera. The cluttered frame is dominated by circular graphic design (fresh hanging pots). Miyagi mixes clay with a large wooden ladle, her upper body moving in a circular motion. Genjuro works the rotating potters wheel. A sense of urgency and haste is palpably felt in Genjuro, which upsets Miyagi. Miyagi chastises Genjuro: "You're completely changed. You're so grouchy. All I want is for us to work together happily –just the three of us. I don't care about anything else." One can read the shot's circular harmony as a counterpoint to the scene's tension.

Each of the four central characters has at least one dramatic physical fall. Ohama's first dramatic fall occurs in scene 12, shot 83. The shot ends a scene in which Ohama has been viciously raped by a gang of marauding soldiers. Devastated and morally weakened, Ohama grabs onto a porch pole. She berates her absent husband and then turns to walk up the steps. She teeters to the end of the porch, bellows a final cathartic yell, and crumbles to the ground in a slow heap.

The picnic scene (17) is another powerful example of this thematic use of vertical character blocking and camera movement. This point in time simultaneously marks Genjuro's euphoric high and moral low. It is the single moment where he completely gives himself up to the hedonistic passions of Wakasa's unnatural 'ghost'

love (as he says, “I wouldn’t even care if you were a demon”). It signals Genjuro at his most selfish moment, but also triggers the opposite emotion in the spectator: sympathy for the pain, sorrow, and suffering of the wholly good, wholly selfless Miyagi.⁴ All of these emotions are expressed through the scene’s character blocking, in a series of dramatic and euphoric character falls and rises, ending with a boom down to Wakasa as she falls down next to Genjuro in a close embrace.



One of Genjuro’s Many Dramatic ‘Falls’

Tobei and Ohama share a dramatic fall in scene 22, during their chance encounter at a brothel. The overall downward geographical trajectory of the scene’s final long take (shot 151, 1’44”) begins on the brothel porch, continues to the backyard grounds, and ends with both of them falling to the ground in an embrace (recalling the above end). Ohama’s enraged dialogue at the beginning of the moment reflects the theme of moral ‘fall’:

Surely you must be pleased. For a man’s success someone has to suffer. My fall will be offset by your great rise! You’ll

⁴ This contrast is underscored by the fact that Mizoguchi makes a dramatic cut from this scene to Miyagi in danger (cut from shot 130 to 131).

be my guest for tonight! Pay me the money you gained by your exploits.⁵

Less than two minutes after Genjuro's great fall (scene 17), we are presented with Miyagi's dramatic fall. As critic Felix Martialay notes, "While Genjuro the potter falls drunk with wine and lust onto the picnic cloth in the garden after his bath, Miyagi, his wife, falls 'doubly' dead."⁶ The difference is that in her case the fall is not symbolic of a moral fall, but rather a fall to death that removes her from the natural world. The tragedy of her fall serves to reflect negatively on the moral character of the world around her (most obviously, the civil war and what it does to people). There are many things that can be said about this impressive long take (1'42"), which is the film's purest example of the much discussed Mizoguchi one scene/one shot (or one scene/one cut) method. But what is interesting in the context of the theme of the fall, is how Miyagi, with a spear wound in her abdomen and the weight of Genichi on her back, still has the strength and perseverance to lift herself up from the ground on several occasions. Which stands in contrast to Genjuro, who on several occasions is too weak to stand on his feet and needs to be helped up, for no apparent physical reason. So the vertical character movements are used here as indicators of moral resolve and fortitude. With Miyagi demonstrating that she has both in abundance.

⁵ This subtitling is directly from the laserdisc/videotape. The script from Keiko McDonald's *Ugetsu* is slightly different but maintains the 'fall' references: "I hope you are pleased with yourself! It must be wonderful seeing your dream come true. But of course fame costs something in suffering. And here I am, the great man's fallen wife. I know what. You can join the ranks of my customers tonight. Come on. Pay this fallen women some of the money you earned through your distinguished services!"

⁶Felix Martialay, "*Ugetsu*," *Film Ideal* (January 15, 1965): 44-45, quoted in Keiko McDonald, ed., *Ugetsu* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 139.

Movement/Journey Into Supernatural Time

The boat journey foreshadows Genjuro's encounter with the supernatural through its suggestively eerie mood (while remaining explainable). An element that gives this scene an undercurrent of the strange and unworldly is the slightly rocking camera. The instability here is rationally motivated by the water setting, but can also be related to what cinematographer Kazuo Miyagawa noted about the unstable camera projecting a sense of the supernatural to the audience:

The crane is moving. It is moving even when the picture seems like it is still. The scene of the mansion, Kutsuki, the camera is rolling consciously. That means the picture is unstable. This is something Mr. Mizoguchi insisted we should go ahead with. For viewers, through this instability of the pictures, I think we were able to tap into their images of a ghost.⁷

The natural motivation for the rocking movement, and the realist explanation given by the stranded boatman –he is not a ghost but has been raided by pirates- forms an uncomfortable alliance with such uncanny touches as the rhythmic drumbeat and the mysterious fog (though these too can be naturally or realistically motivated). It is this precise mixing of the natural with the mysterious that gives the film its confluence of real (or natural) time and supernatural time. Another element that gives this scene an undercurrent of the strange and unworldly is the soundtrack. Many writers have noted the cultural importance of Noh drama on *Ugetsu*.⁸ The use of Noh music is of

⁷ *Ugetsu* laserdisk.

⁸ Most specifically, the representation of the ghostly Princess Wakasa, with her expressionless mask-like face, her costume, and her mannered dance movements, and the mysterious, long corridors of the Kutsuki mansion. Tadao Sato, "The Subject and Form of Traditional Theater Made Into a Film-*Ugetsu*," in *Ugetsu*, ed. Keiko I. McDonald, (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 162-166.

particular interest in relation to time. As Graham Parkes notes about Noh music, “The rhythms of the percussion are based on an extremely long and often irregular beat, which has the effect after a while of profoundly altering the audience’s sense of time.”⁹ This scene, which contains 5 long takes, becomes a moment of heightened time through the intermittent drum gong, the mysterious fog, the restricted visual field, and the palpable sense of unease felt by the characters.

The boat scene is the initial journey that sets Genjuro, Tobei and Ohama on their way to moral destruction, but shots 98-102 from scene 14 comprise a second journey, one that brings Genjuro directly in contact with the spirit world. The moment at which Genjuro passes through the doorway into the Kutsuki mansion, passing through the threshold into this supernatural world, is marked by a distinct chime (shot 102). The chimes, which are now associated with this passage between worlds, are heard intermittently throughout the Kutsuki mansion scenes. From this point on most every time we are in the mansion, there is a constant, percussive drum beat and/or hollow flute sound heard on the soundtrack, that, as noted by Graham Parkes, can “profoundly [alter] the audience’s sense of time.”

In the next shot (103), the camera is at a high angle looking down at the mansion from behind a bare tree in the courtyard. The camera cranes down to the mansion and pans past a second bare tree, following Lady Wakasa’s (Machiko Kyo) nurse, Ukon (Kikue Mori), as she leads Genjuro through the house. They turn a right corner and the camera pans to follow them, stopping to frame a third tree on the right edge of the frame. What is odd here is that this third tree appears in full bloom, with leaf-filled branches. Is it a tree which blooms at a different time from the other two bare trees? Or has Genjuro’s presence slowly brought the mansion back to life, in

⁹ Graham Parkes, “Ways of Japanese Thinking,” Nancy G. Hume, ed., *Japanese Aesthetics and Culture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 95.

effect moving back in time? There are three other shots where the camera assumes this same high angle courtyard vantage, shots 116, 156, and 174. The composition in shots 116 and 156 express a similar temporal-nature disjunction: we see part of a



Opening/Closing of Long Take Shot 103: Movement Back in Time?

bare tree in the left foreground and a tree in full bloom in the opposite right foreground. Since this is a set, one must assume that Mizoguchi, known for his meticulous attention to detail, placed these ‘disparate’ stage-trees within the same frame for a particular effect. Shot 116 immediately follows the shot where we see the two silhouetted figures preparing Genjuro for the wedding. Perhaps the pairing of the two ill-matched trees is meant to subtly reflect on the ‘un-natural’ alliance between Genjuro and Lady Wakasa?

Once in the supernatural world of the Kutsuki mansion, elements begin to constrict around Genjuro, as if to accentuate the disunion of these two different temporal planes of existence: the natural and supernatural. To begin, the three scenes (14, 15, 25) that take place directly inside the Kutsuki mansion total 21’55” of the film’s total screen-time. There are 18 long takes in these three scenes, including several clusters (shots 101-103, 108-112, 121-123, 157-160) which take place within the confined quarters of the mansion. Adding to the sense of confinement is the rhythmic, constant, and sometimes percussive sound of a drumbeat and/or flute, like a ticking clock, which does not “alter the audience’s sense of time”, so much as

underscore the temporal strangeness, or demarcate it as a moment in ‘unnatural time.’ Genjuro’s sense of claustrophobia is also underscored on several occasions by Ukon or Lady Wakasa blocking his path of exit or movement, and the frequent use of high angles that frame Genjuro in a physically submissive position. All of these formal properties of the *mise en scène* (aspects of internal time) work in tandem with the relatively extended duration of the Kutsuki scenes to help transmit the sense of entrapment that Genjuro feels as he slowly begins to realize the unnaturalness of his alliance.

As scene 14 progresses, so does the weakening of Genjuro’s moral resolve to resist the enticement of the ghost world. The physical and emotional claustrophobia increases around Genjuro after Lady Wakasa’s nurse, Ukon, suggests, “Take Wakasa’s advice. Now is your opportunity. Wed her at once.” Stunned by the suggestion, the fallen Genjuro recoils from Wakasa. The camera reframes left and cranes up as Wakasa rises and shuffles toward Genjuro, who also rises to his feet. She throws herself around him and they both fall limply to the ground. A subtle touch is added in the *mise-en-scène* to relate Genjuro’s weakened emotional and physical state: his breath becomes visible in the air. This can be seen as a visual metaphor for how he has literally “lost his breath.”¹⁰ After exhaling this ‘visible’ breath, two attendants must help Genjuro lift his limp body to its feet. Genjuro has reached the point where he is too weak to even stand under his own power. The torturous ‘rise’ signals the moral depths to which he has allowed himself to plunge. In his weakened state he is helpless to resist the unholy wedding alliance which mysteriously transpires during this scene.

¹⁰ The visible breath can be also seen within the convention of the supernatural/horror tale, where the air turns cold in the presence of ghosts or in haunted houses.



Genjuro's torturous moral rise

The final scene in the Kutsuki mansion, scene 25, includes a series of long takes that progressively intensify Genjuro's descent into the supernatural. Mizoguchi projects this with an increasing sense of physical entrapment through character blocking and mise-en-scène. Which also brings together the use of vertical movements (falls, rises, camera tilts) that collectively function as a formal manifestation of the film's theme of the 'fall' from a state of familial harmony. Over the course of the final shots of this scene (170-174), Genjuro, frantic, weak, and emotionally exhausted, attempts to escape his supernatural lair in a series of symbolic movements falling backward, as if coming out of a nightmare/dream. The final shot of this scene begins on a match cut of Genjuro falling back against a partition leading into the courtyard. He stumbles and falls to the ground in the middle of the courtyard. From his ground position he continues to flay his sword, but Wakasa and Ukon do not appear. Exhausted, he collapses backward and loses consciousness. This transitional shot to the outside courtyard begins Genjuro's return to the natural 'present' world (away from Wakasa's 'living' past), and as such renders a sense of *passing through*

time by the subtly changed condition of the courtyard. Though the courtyard that we see in glimpses is never immaculate, in some earlier shots (as noted in shot 103 for example) we do see the odd tree with leaves, neat patches of grass, and Japanese garden artifacts. But there is no such feel to the courtyard in this shot. The camera is up high looking through a stark, leafless tree. Mist surrounds the courtyard, which now appears in a more decrepit and unkempt state than glimpsed in earlier shots. If we accept the earlier reading of a movement back in time occurring in shot 103, then the movement here can be seen as a reversal of that movement back to the present. In any case, the transition from supernatural time to reality time will be clear and complete the moment the film proceeds to the next scene/shot in the film, when Genjuro awakens to find the Kutsuki mansion in ruins (26/175).

Supernatural Time Meets Natural/Real Time

Well into the first scene in the Kutsuki mansion, and prior to the consummation of the mysterious Genjuro-Wakasa wedding, we are treated to one of several long takes where real time and supernatural time is woven within the continuity of a single shot, to eerie effect. An important ingredient to the creation of the supernatural in this shot is the way Mizoguchi slowly adds non-diegetic layering to the diegetic sound. At first we hear Wakasa singing the wedding song ("The finest silk, of choicest hue..."), with on-screen musical accompaniment from Ukon. Other non-diegetic instruments are introduced to the song, followed by a low-pitched male voice. Wakasa appears terrified of the voice. The light in the room darkens without rational explanation, signaling a dramatic reaffirmation of supernatural time. The camera pans away from Wakasa across the length of the room to reveal the source of

the sound: a medieval military helmet perched on a stand. The black armor and the voice that we hear belong to the ghost of Wakasa's father. This reveals that not only are the mansion's inhabitants ghosts (as we learn later), but the house is doubly haunted by an invisible figure from the past. So within the single take three time states are being represented: the dead past (father), the living past (Wakasa), and the living present (Genjuro).

Just how much story time has elapsed in the screen-time covered by the four scenes in and around the Kutsuki mansion, from 38'38" to 56'43" (scenes 14-17), is kept elusive. This is not a script 'problem', but another way of transmitting Genjuro's disorienting encounter with supernatural time. This uncertainty in story time across the Kutsuki scenes is greatly aided by two symbiotic homomorphic time long takes that link together three of the four scenes comprising the Kutsuki sequence. The Marriage scene is joined to the Bath scene by a deceptive dissolve camouflaged on the action of the camera dollying left along a dark wall as it sets off to follow nurse Ukon, to the camera dollying and craning in the same direction in a new exterior location past trees, bushes, and down to the exterior natural hot springs. The point of this hidden dissolve, like the one that joins scene 16 to scene 17, is to subtly instill temporal disorientation. In one sense the masked transition suggests a continuity between shots/scenes; while the change in locations, change in character costume, and change in character behaviour implies the passage of time. It is clearly a homomorphic time that is being represented, but exactly how much time is unclear.

The symbiotic homomorphic long take that joins scene 16 to scene 17 is even more difficult to discern (as is the amount of time being elapsed). Genjuro is inside the hot bath, his hungry eyes following Wakasa's off-frame movement as she slips into the bath (we hear the off-frame sound of her entering the water). As Genjuro

moves toward her, the camera, instead of panning to follow, tracks in the opposite direction, leaving behind this private, illicit liaison between two disparate beings. The camera pans past a wooded area, tilts down along a stream of water as it makes its way through wet, glistening rocks on the side of a hill, and continues to track along a rocky terrain that camouflages a dissolve on a graphic match to the swirling, manicured tapestry of a Japanese Zen garden. This flux-like movement ends on an upward crane tilt that fixes on Genjuro and Wakasa in long shot, spread out on a picnic blanket. As in the previous dissolve, just how much time has elapsed is uncertain. As Audie Bock writes, "Not only has time passed through the dissolve (in the original story Genjuro fails to return to his native village for seven years), but the viewer has passed through an unpeopled space that brings to mind emptiness and the transiency of human life"¹¹ Bock does not mention, however, how Mizoguchi again uses the coding of nature's cyclical time to subtly represent the passage of time. In the final shot (127) of scene 16, the camera cranes past a series of trees filled with fruit and thick foliage. In the subsequent symbiotic homomorphic long take shot the camera settles on a long shot of Genjuro and Wakasa lying on a picnic blanket with two starkly bare trees visible behind them. The stark contrast in trees shows that we have moved ahead from summer to late fall or early winter, but nature's cyclical time prevents us from ascertaining the precise durational span (one seasonal cycle or two seasonal cycles?).

The two symbiotic homomorphic time long takes function narratively to advance the story by projecting the mental state of Genjuro and Wakasa, giddy and intoxicated by rapturous love. They thematically underscore not only Genjuro's

¹¹ Audie Bock, "Ugetsu," in Keiko I. McDonald, ed., *Ugetsu* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 160. In *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, Deleuze quotes Godard with the estimation "several months later" (193).

disoriented state of mind, but his escape from reality (the civil war being waged, the hardships faced by his wife and child, his responsibilities as a father, husband, and civilian, etc.). The long, sinewy camera movement in the second symbiotic homomorphic long take is also a physical manifestation of time, with the uncertainty and mystery of the movement itself (where is the shot taking us?) a parallel to the indeterminate time lapse between scenes 16 and 17. And formally, this meaning is inscribed in a movement whose beginning to end completes the thematically encoded fall/rise trajectory (beginning with a crane down and ending with a tilt up).

The thematic sense of disorientation and disengagement with the natural world is achieved through a tension between how the symbiotic homomorphic and the symbiotic automorphic long take normally function.¹² The purpose of the symbiotic automorphic long take is to disguise a technical discontinuity with the purpose of achieving narrative temporal continuity. The purpose of the symbiotic homomorphic long take is to disguise or smoothen only the technical discontinuity (narrative temporal discontinuity is textually inscribed). In these two symbiotic homomorphic long takes, especially the second, the illusion of seamless time/space is so well achieved artistically and technically that they parallel the moments where time moves ‘unnaturally’ in relation to continuous long take real time. So even though we are aware that there has been a homomorphic representation of time, the execution and the context is designed to make it feel unnatural (supernatural time).

Scene 13, “Genjuro’s Daydream”, contains another long take that joins two different temporal planes, real time and fantasy time, in a way unique to Mizoguchi.¹³

¹² There may also be something to the fact that in the first shot following the dissolve, number 129, Genjuro and Wakasa are composed in front of two stark, barren trees. The graphic symmetry perhaps suggesting a parallel between them as an “unnatural” couple and the two natural trees.

¹³ Tarkovsky, who lists Mizoguchi as one of his favorite directors, was no doubt influenced by this stylistic gesture of mixing real and fantasy time in the same shot.

Genjuro is about to delivery a package to Lady Wakasa. His attention is distracted by a village clothing store. The camera gives us his point of view of hanging garments, then cuts back to Genjuro perched outside the shop in a pensive stare. Romantic music begins to swell, cueing the shift to a dream/fantasy state. The camera is now inside what looks like Genjuro's house. In the background out through an open door we see the front area of Genjuro's home. Miyagi, in silhouette, enters through the door carrying pottery. It is telling that this is how Genjuro remembers Miyagi –as a workmate- because this echoes the ideal that Miyagi holds of Genjuro at the end of the film. Miyagi walks into the house toward the foreground, the camera dollying back. Miyagi's attention is taken by beautiful garments hanging in the right foreground. At this point we are confused as to the temporal/spatial setting of this scene; but it soon becomes clear that the space is a confluence –in Genjuro's mind- of his house and the garment shop –a wonderful manifestation of Deleuze's 'sheets of the past'. The camera, always in a continuous movement, dollies back to reveal Genjuro standing frame right with his back to the camera. The daydream ends with a cut back to Genjuro's face. But no sooner is Genjuro out of one daydream, does he enter the more ominous, threatening supernatural world of the Kutsuki mansion where, as we have seen, time is as slippery and elusive as some of Mizoguchi's camera movements.

The meeting of supernatural time and natural time is strikingly achieved in the famous Homecoming scene. In the prior scene (26), Genjuro is rudely 'awakened' back to reality by government officials who find him asleep near the ruins of the Kutsuki mansion. The condition of the ruined mansion creates an immediate temporal discord with the state it was in only moments ago, mysterious yet alive. This sense of

temporal discord and of loss and confusion is felt palpably by Genjuro.¹⁴ One official implies that the mansion burned down. But the destruction of the Kutsuki mansion can also be seen as the result of a natural aging process: destruction within nature's cyclical time frame. This is an important point for understanding how the film philosophically resolves Genjuro and Tobei's moral 'fall'. Even though Genjuro is emotionally shattered, he accepts what his eyes present to him. This is made clear in the following shot, with Genjuro walking back to his home village, ready to pick up the pieces of his life. In both *Ugetsu* and *The Magnificent Ambersons* we see a family ruined through the ravages of time. But in *Ambersons* 'time the destroyer' is brought on by the straightforward march of social and technological progress that leaves all behind in its wake. Within a conception of linear time, there is no possibility of returning back to a former time. But in *Ugetsu*, time, tied to the cyclical patterns of an 'impersonal nature', can hold forth the promise of hope and rejuvenation.

Such a promise of hope and rejuvenation occurs, literally, two shots later in scene 27, "The Homecoming", where Genjuro's own circular movement brings Miyagi (or her spirit) back to life. In terms of sheer innovative disruption of real time convention, this long take of 1'01" is one of cinema's exemplary moments. Genjuro enters his dark and deserted home. He calls out for Miyagi and walks screen right (in full shot). The camera pans right to reveal the house's decrepit state. He begins to walk in the opposite direction, in search of Miyagi. The camera pans left with him. He

¹⁴ The emotions emitted by this moment can be described by the word 'sabi', a Zen term used to define the passage of time. Filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky defines *sabi* as follows: "In his account of Japan the Soviet journalist Ovchinnikov wrote: 'It is considered that time, *per se*, helps to make known the essence of things. The Japanese therefore see a particular charm in the evidence of old age. They are attracted to the darkened tone of an old tree, the ruggedness of a stone, or even the scruffy look of a picture whose edges have been handled by a great many people. To all these signs of age they give the name, *saba*, which literally means 'rust'. *Saba*, then, is a natural rustiness, the charm of olden days, the stamp of time.'" Andrei Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time: Reflections on the Cinema*, Kitty Hunter-Blair, trans. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), 59. The word here has been translated to *saba*, but the more common English translation is *sabi*.

then exits through a side door and turns back in the direction of the front door. The camera pans right to retrace its path, only now at a slower pace, even hesitating momentarily at an empty table, as if to underscore Miyagi's absence.¹⁵ Genjuro is visible through an open window as he continues to walk to the front of the house. More surprisingly is the lit candle that appears on the extreme right corner of the frame, which was not there a moment ago. Then, in the same continuous movement, and startling our sense of 'real' time and space, is the revelatory sight of Miyagi seated and cooking at the hearth. The deliberate left-to-right, semi-circular camera movement becomes a figurative movement in time, *seemingly* returning us back to a time when the family unit was intact and harmonious. It also brings together, in its most concrete form, the film's mix of real time and fantasy time. Robin Wood describes this famous homecoming scene as follows:

The *frisson* this moment excites is due largely to the simple technical fact [not so simple giving the quick change in set design that was necessary] that there has been no cut, no dissolve, no editing of any kind: the impossible has happened before our eyes¹⁶

The Homecoming Scene and Automorphic/Homomorphic Time

To elaborate on why this shot achieves its 'frisson', it must be placed into the context I wrote of earlier, homomorphic and automorphic representations of time. As Currie writes, "Automorphic representation is standard for duration."¹⁷ The long

¹⁵ No doubt the camera slows down to also give the film crew time to re-arrange the offscreen objects which will soon magically appear in the same space.

¹⁶ Robin Wood, "Mizoguchi: The Ghost Princess and the Seaweed Gatherer," *Film Comment* (March 1973): 35

¹⁷ Gregory Currie, *Image and Mind: Film, Philosophy and Cognitive Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 99.

take's inherent ability "to render an actual passage of time" is, in this sense, used against itself for dramatic effect. Across the history of film and film theory, from the Lumière brothers to André Bazin, to the various outgrowths of the documentary tradition and 'vérité' filmmaking, the 'actual passage of time' has become strongly associated with 'real time': the representation of continuous time and space. Although it would make better theoretical sense for 'real time' to be likened to 'perceptual salience' rather than 'realism' or 'a more democratic spectatorship', the tradition exists and persists. And because of this theoretical and filmic tradition, altering or manipulating the convention of real time can be used for dramatic effect, as it is several times in *Ugetsu*.

This Homecoming scene is an excellent case in point for the potential levels of complexity within automorphic/homomorphic time and the long take. For a narrative shift within a long take to be construed as homomorphic, the effect has to be a form of 'substitute editing' that advances the narrative time. But in the case of Genjuro returning home and discovering his wife Miyagi alive, the temporal anomaly signals a shift into another realm of reality (fantasy, dream, or supernatural). Hence within the context of the narrative moment (being either fantasy, dream state, or immersion into the supernatural), the time remains automorphic because the "...temporal properties of elements of the representation serve to represent temporal properties of the things represented."¹⁸ So the 1'01" of screen-time that represents Genjuro walking into, around, out, and back into the house serves to represent the time necessary for Miyagi's ghost to appear in a previously seen empty space. It does not represent a literal shift back in time to when Miyagi was alive, which would make it homomorphic time (a shift in narrative time). Although this does not preclude the

¹⁸ Ibid., 96.

possibility for someone to momentarily read the scene in this manner, or perhaps as a flashback.

A similar device is used in the final shot of the homecoming scene (183). Genjuro and Genichi have fallen asleep. The spectral Miyagi quietly mends Genjuro's tattered kimono in near dark so as not to disturb their sleep. From this point on, the mise-en-scène seems to employ the "time-bending" technique where story time attains a value unequal to screen-time. As Miyagi diligently sews in continuous real time, the space around her brightens as sunlight slowly seeps into the room through the holes,



Automorphic or Homomorphic Representation of Time?

Miyagi by slowing down the film a pacing considerably during the Homecoming crevices, window slats, and openings along the front side of the house. The several hours that it takes for night to turn to day occurs in a matter of seconds. But the question of whether the event is representing automorphic or homomorphic time is dependent on interpretation. The effect is not like the example in Chapter 4 from *A Place in the Sun*, where the 1'42" of screen-time represented by the long take clearly represents several hours necessary for the evening to change to early morning. If the sun rising and shining into the cracks of the house is a narrational device, then this is clearly a homomorphic representation of time. But if the temporal compression is a manifestation of Miyagi's supernatural time, her supernatural being, then this can be read as an automorphic representation of time. In this reading, the quickly rising sun

is a slippage back to natural time, with Miyagi being simply locked into her own time frame. I lean toward this reading because in this type of mise-en-trickery homomorphic long take, the human subject is usually either asleep (*La Symphonie pastorale*), off-screen (*A Place in the Sun*), or not present, so as not to interfere with the realism of the device. Although a sleeping Genjuro is visible, Miyagi remains awake and present, living through the otherwise unnatural temporal compression. Hence the decision of whether or not this long take represents objective narrative time or whether we are still trapped within the experience of Miyagi's supernatural time is dependent on interpretation. If one reads the act itself as supernatural, then it remains automorphic time. If one reads it as a narrational device, then it is homomorphic time.

Momentous Time

Mizoguchi heightens the moment of reunion between Genjuro and the ghostly Miyagi by slowing down the film's pacing considerably during the Homecoming scene, with five consecutive long takes of (nearly) increasing length: 35", 1'01", 1'59", 1'51", 1'59". The scene's final three long takes, shots 181-183, represent the film's most complex treatment of time within the long take, and mixing of real time and supernatural time. Important to the sense of time in shot 181 is the subtle way the camera dollies in ever so slowly from a medium three-shot of the family unit (Miyagi, Genjuro, Genichi), to a close view of Miyagi in her tormented state. It takes the camera an agonizing 1'30" to move from point A to point B. Miyagi's acting is especially important in this shot, rendering added import to what will be the final time we see her face up close in clear view. After this point on she will be shot from afar, from behind, or in the dark, and eventually only heard in voice-over. By isolating

Miyagi, the long take also underscores how she is now of a different nature than her human husband and son. Genichi's head is visible in the right edge of the frame. She looks over longingly at her son and husband. Tears come to her eyes. She wipes them with the sleeve of her kimono. She then stares off into space and shifts her hand up under her neck, a gesture of pained recognition that this will be her final remaining moments of physicality with her family. As Keiko McDonald notes during her commentary on the *Ugetsu* laserdisc:

According to Buddhist belief the soul of someone departed is denied permanent sojourn in paradise so long as his detachment to the world left behind is strong. Such a soul must roam the earth as a ghost.

Miyagi realizes that she must let go of her earthly desires, a sacrifice which Lady Wakasa was unable to make. During this shot the camera is stopped, but rocks ever so slightly, as if to suggest the precarious line between the earthly and the spirit worlds, and again recalling cinematographer Kazuo Miyagawa's comments.

The scene cuts from this clear shot of Miyagi to an abrupt reverse angle position of Miyagi seated from behind in the darkened room. This is a startling edit, firstly in its abrupt change in angle from a high angle close-up to a straight on full shot of Miyagi with her back to the camera. And secondly, in how Miyagi appears deathly still, almost like a cardboard cutout, as if to represent that she is of a different nature from Genjuro and Genichi, an 'un-human'. The camera tilts up and reframes left to follow Genjuro put Genichi to bed. Genjuro lies down next to his sleeping son. Miyagi enters frame right to place a blanket over Genjuro. The camera pans right with Miyagi, now in dark silhouette, as she begins the nightly, bedtime chores that she has no doubt performed hundred's of times –cleaning Genjuro's sandals, washing clothes, etc. Suddenly, Miyagi stops her chores. Plaintive flute music begins. Still and quiet,

she looks around the room. She realizes this will be the final time she performs these domestic duties, duties that the film has thematically championed as life's vital center, in contrast to material gains (Genjuro) or personal aggrandizement (Tobei). Everything now takes on a heightened significance for Miyagi. The shot dissolves to the final shot of the scene.

In shot 183 Miyagi continues her nightly chores in near dark. She sits down in profile to the camera, with her body momentarily blocking the room's single light source, a candle. She lights a second candle, which gives the space a soft, warm glow. With Genjuro and Genichi visible asleep below her, Miyagi quietly mends Genjuro's tattered kimono. The several hours that it takes for night to turn to day is compressed into a few seconds. As in other points of the film, supernatural time intrudes into the continuity of real time. Only here the shift to daybreak announces the return to the natural world for us/Genjuro (and return to the netherworld for Miyagi). Miyagi, deeply immersed in her chore, seems unaware of the change in light.¹⁹ Miyagi allows her supernatural time/world to slip away and let Genjuro's real world time take over.

Mizoguchi achieves this stunning temporal complexity by combining the theatrical convention of the raising/lowering of stage lights to signal a scene or act change, with the aforementioned tradition of 'real time' automorphic representation of time in the long take to achieve the surprise 'montage' effect of intermingling realms of time. It is this very balance, this ontological uncertainty, that creates the temporal discord between supernatural and natural time. The intended effect is to maintain a temporary state of wonder, a slippage into an internalised experience of time (Miyagi's), and then *retroactively* resolve the temporal ontology with a cut to the daytime exterior long shot of the house (shot 184). This cut which brings us to scene

¹⁹ Miyagi's deep concentration in her simple chores may be seen as a reflection of the Buddhist belief in the sacredness of the simple, everyday duty as a form of meditation.

28, 'The Morning After', resolves the earlier scene's temporal ambiguity. The next shot (185) takes us back to the same space in the house, with light streaming through the windows and crevices. Only now, with Miyagi gone, this long take reverts back to the conventional automorphic representation of time, a gesture that tells us we are back to natural time and that the previous scene's deployment of supernatural time may have been a condition of Miyagi's ghostly presence (depending on how one interprets this).

The beauty in this long take is that it allows us to see just how carefully and attentively Miyagi performs these small, menial tasks and chores, all done in a slow, methodical pace. Editing would have fragmented the importance of this deliberateness, and the sense of wholeness to an ideal that it imparts. As the night passes on, this supernatural time fades away and is replaced by reality announced by the new morning light shimmering into the room. The subtle change in light from night to day that compresses the large ellipsis in time perhaps symbolizes how Miyagi "stretched" out this moment in time by staying up all night performing these tasks (to stretch to its limit this last living moment with her loving family). The shot's timelessness, or sense of otherworldly time, is aided by the near static position of the camera throughout most of the shot. At 1'59" this shot, along with shot 181, is the longest take in the film. Therefore, the two longest takes in the film, shots 181 and 183, center on Miyagi, a privileged treatment which is in keeping with her position as the film's moral center.

These three long takes totaling just under 6'00" (181-183), are excellent textual examples of how internal and external time can affect each other. As the three longest takes in the film, we are supposed to feel the external time of the shots because of how momentous the actions are for Miyagi. The temporal tonality of this

scene is operating on the “contemplative, passive, sensual, and intermittent” side of spectatorial engagement, with little kinetic energy, for the purpose of allowing us to experience, as close as artistically possible, Miyagi’s perception of time, her ‘psychological time’, shaped by the metaphysical import the moment holds for her. And yet Mizoguchi achieves this momentousness and transmits it to the viewer in the most understated manner possible. The internal time does not attempt to camouflage the external time with compensatory quick pacing or ‘dramatic’ events, but gives it honor by an accumulation of quiet and delicate gestures: a slow dolly shot, low-key lighting, Miyagi’s self-imposed isolation; the still, contemplative camera; Miyagi’s often stoic body position; and the ambiguous representation of time in a long take that takes us from night to day, from the supernatural to the natural.

As exemplified with this scene, a dominant use of slowed down temporal tonality occurs most often in moments of intense character subjectivity (dream states, hallucinations, internalised states, fantasies) or narratives marked by a dream or fantasy logic (supernatural tales, journey narratives, surrealism, etc.). In the above example, the cumulative effect of the aggregate components of the shots’ internal time creates a subtle slippage into Miyagi’s supernaturally and subjectively heightened experience of time, where we can no longer gauge with accuracy or certainty just how long the represented acts are lasting, and whether they constitute an automorphic or homomorphic representation of time.

The Homecoming scene has important consequences for the specificity of long take and time, and why certain narrative events or thematic meaning become expressive specifically because they have been filmed in long take. As David McDougall noted earlier, in the end “duration does finally matter”. But why it ‘matters’ will vary from case to case. In some cases the duration matters because it

adds to the dramatic and emotional moment of a scene, which is the case in the above *Ugetsu* example. Or because it adds to a sense of spectacle or performance (which was discussed in chapter 5); or because it is a more efficient means of telling a particular plot point (which partly accounts for the high percentage of long takes that open or close a scene); even when the value is more abstract, as is sometimes the case when time is foregrounded through the formal characteristics of 'slow' temporal tonality, this 'value' never operates in isolation from one of the other noted factors (sense of spectacle, narrative efficiency, heightened dramatic or emotional moment, and/or as a formal expression of theme or meaning).

Circularity: To End or to Begin?

The morning-after-the-marriage scene (15) is one of the many examples in *Ugetsu* of 'circularity' (moments that double, mirror, or foreshadow other moments). In shot 122 we see Genjuro asleep. Wakasa, who has presumably slept next to him in the consummation of their marriage, arises from the bed and gently places a blanket over Genjuro. She admires the sleeping Genjuro for a moment, and then walks to the adjoining room, kneels in front of a mirror and begins to comb her hair. In the next shot she returns to his bedside, and places a lantern above Genjuro's head to better view his sleeping face. These actions foreshadow, in a small way, the daily, quotidian actions that Miyagi performs around a sleeping Genjuro when she returns as a ghost in the scene described above (scene 27, shots 182 and 183).

In the scene following The Homecoming scene, the Village Master informs Genjuro about the death of his wife. The revelation is made in the course of another long take (1'25"). When Genjuro calls out for Miyagi, the Master places his hand on

his shoulder and asks, “Aren’t you dreaming, Genjuro? You’re wife was killed.” Genjuro walks over to the space where he last saw Miyagi cooking at the hearth. He drops to his knees, places his arm out to feel for Miyagi, then looks around back at the Master. This moment recalls Genjuro’s other “reawakening”, when the city officials find him lying asleep next to the castle ruins (and also ask him if he was dreaming). In both cases Genjuro awakens after having spent time with a female ghost and, in a somnambulist state, walks through the ‘ghostly space’, feeling for what his eyes no longer see (the spot in mansion ruins where the new material once hung in shot 178, the hearth area in shot 186).

The art direction at the tail end of the long take that ends scene 22 (“Tobei Meets His Fallen Wife”) is extremely evocative of another key moment in the film. At various points during the shot we see, ranging from the middleground to the background, a docked boat, water, marsh, and reeds, elements that recall the boat journey that began their ill-fated sojourn. By the end of this long take Tobei comes to realize the fallacy of his ‘rise’ and Ohama’s subsequent ‘fall’. This scene represents the abyss of their fall, while the art direction recalls its point of origin. Combined, they form a memory-image, where the virtual past co-exists with the present and enhances the scene’s emotional power. This shared fall between Tobei and Ohama also mirrors the double fall of Genjuro and Wakasa in the picnic scene (17). In both cases the couples fall to the ground together and the scenes end on shots of them lying on the ground in a state of reckless embrace.

The formal play of fantasy space within a continuous, flowing, long take in scene 13, “Genjuro’s Daydream”, foreshadows the equally stunning revelation of Miyagi during the later “Homecoming” scene (27, shot 180). These two shots comprise an interesting mirror effect. In this shot (92), the spectator is surprised when

the camera reveals Genjuro watching Miyagi, while in the later shot the surprise for us and Genjuro comes in seeing Miyagi appear in the shot. Such doublings or echoings of scenes, shots, gestures, actions, or movements occurs from the beginning to the end of the film, and with such striking regularity that they shape and are shaped by the film's over-all philosophical notion of circular time. Spiraling inward from the parallel opening and closing shots, these mirroring events and situations echo nature's own recurring, circular rhythms.

The final scene reaffirms the film's consistent structural doubling and philosophical acceptance of cyclical (or circular) time. The scene begins at Miyagi's graveside, her final resting place now that she has seen Genjuro back to his former ways/self. In voice-over, we hear Miyagi forgive Genjuro for his sins ("Your erring has come to an end"). The line seems like a resolution to Miyagi's earlier admonishment of perceived changes in Genjuro in scene 6: "You're completely changed. You're so grouchy...." In the next shot Genjuro is seen immersed in his work, as in the beginning, only now he appears at peace with himself, attending to his work with care and diligence. The circularity is present throughout this scene in Genjuro's return to work, the objects in the frame (the pottery wheel, the wheel's spinning motion, and a round table), Genjuro's circular motions, Miyagi's voice-over which recalls the earlier scene (6) of them working together, and the final shot which echoes the film's opening shot.

While Genjuro works the pottery wheel, the scene cuts to an empty close-up of a second pottery wheel, Miyagi's, which serves to underscore her absence. In this brief shot we see a space once happily occupied by Miyagi, his loving wife and source of inspiration, now still and empty. The emotion expressed here is an excellent example of the Buddhist term *mono-no-aware* –defined as "the sadness of things" or

“sensitivity to things.” But within mono-no-aware there is also acceptance of pain, loss, and the transience of life. Therefore the round potters wheel, center framed and lit to stand out from other objects in the frame, also indicates that, regardless of hardships faced, life must continue for the living, as Miyagi’s voice-over also implies (a sense of mono-no-aware is also present at the end of shot 180, where Genjuro’s self-realisation of his ghostly encounter is set within a glowing patch of luminous light shimmering off the water in the distant, upper background).

A circular understanding of time is an integral part of the Buddhist acceptance of life’s impermanence and hardships. Just how much Mizoguchi adhered to a Buddhist philosophy is inconclusive (although an appreciation of nature and its cyclical rhythms is surely an ingrained aspect of Japanese culture). Dudley and Paul Andrew provide some biographical context:

Its [*Ugetsu*] final paradoxical message of stoicism based on an allegiance to death, to the past, to absence in general would seem to be a major Buddhist statement. It was at this very time that Mizoguchi adopted the cult of Nichiren Buddhism, just as his father had done after the 1923 earthquake. Undoubtedly, he was influenced in this by Nagata, his close friend and producer and a devout member of the sect. How serious Mizoguchi’s feelings were is debatable.²⁰

Even though we can not be certain concerning Mizoguchi’s actual allegiance to Buddhism, we can at least offer some concurrence between Nichiren conception of time and that presented in *Ugetsu*:

²⁰ Dudley Andrew and Paul Andrew, *Kenji Mizoguchi: a guide to references and resources*, (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1981), 19. Audie Bock notes that Mizoguchi “had become, in his own inimitable capricious fashion, a follower of the Nichiren sect, as his detested father had done after the trauma of the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake...Mizoguchi died [in 1956] a devout Buddhist,” (*Japanese Film Directors*, 52).

Is it not true that one hundred years' training in a heavenly paradise does not compare with one day's work in the earthly world....Flowers bloom in the spring, and fruits are ripe in the autumn; it is hot in summer and cold in winter. Is it not time that makes these differences?²¹ Nichiren here welcomes the processes of time, even if they bring corruption; he sees them as an opportunity for a service to the truth. Time provides the opportunity for a turning point from degeneration to regeneration.²²

It is only fitting in a film filled with vertical movements of character and camera, that the film end with an upward crane movement that concludes the film on a feeling of “regeneration”. The camera leaves Genichi at the foot of Miyagi’s grave to move upward to the trees and surrounding village landscape. Visible in the extreme background are other farmers working the land. It is a movement that mirrors the opening shot, but in reverse, taking us from the specific to the general.



Opening of First shot



Ending of Last shot

At once, the upward crane movement fixes the film’s philosophical understanding of time within the circular mode of nature: as this family’s plight comes to an end and a new beginning, it is placed as one story within many. Mizoguchi scholar Keiko

²¹ Masaharu Anesaki, *Nichiren the Buddhist Prophet*, quoted by Hajime Nakamura in “Time in Indian and Japanese Thought,” J.T.Fraser, ed., *The Voices of Time* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1981), 90.

²² Hajime Nakamura in “Time in Indian and Japanese Thought,” J.T.Fraser, ed., *The Voices of Time* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1981), 91.

McDonald summarizes as follows:

The conclusion of *Ugetsu* reinforces the classical idea of *mujo* through another traditional trope: the rotating wheel (representing the concept of a perpetual cycle, as opposed to a teleological belief in history, with a beginning, middle, and end)....The physical absence of Miyagi acutely echoes the idea of impermanence. Then too, time, symbolized by the wheel, transcends all human affairs. The film begins and ends with a shot of the mountain village. The tension of war and the serenity of a tentative peace in the future are thus presented as part of the cyclical pattern working itself out in the fullness of time²³

Hence even with the noted uncertainty with regards Mizoguchi's allegiance to Buddhism, Andrew, McDonald, and many others, place Mizoguchi's style plainly within the Buddhist tradition. Andrew adds:

The Japanese critic Tadao Sato has demonstrated how intimately related to traditional Japanese arts is this Zen attitude of Mizoguchi, an attitude that crystallizes in the peculiarly Japanese effect of 'impermanent posturing' Mizoguchi's films deliver neither clear statement, nor well-constructed drama, nor stable outline. Instead, he presents us with the *process* of coming to a peak of meaning, only to slip off in search of something further. This eloquently describes the feelings conveyed by his famous crane shots which, at the appropriate moment in the drama, glide into a perfectly expressive composition and then fall away after holding this posture for as long as is seemly.²⁴

This sense of shifting impermanence carries over into *Ugetsu*'s philosophy of time. Some of the camera movements, especially those that, as Andrew notes, move away from a fixed or completed dramatic moment to an 'open' moment, become indicators

²³"Introduction," in Keiko I. McDonald, ed., *Ugetsu* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 16.

²⁴Dudley Andrew, "Passion of Identification in the Late Films of Kenji Mizoguchi," *Film in the Aura of Art* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), 183.

of the flux-like, impermanence of time; like the son's final gesture at the mother's grave in the final shot, where an image of finality (Miyagi's death) gives way to an upward camera movement which, in echoing the opening shot, concludes the film's structural circularity. This movement also universalizes time by placing this family within the larger farming community and by expressing a sense of continuity with the changing seasons of farm life.

But how do the "feelings conveyed by" or "peak of meaning" expressed in this shot relate to that expressed in some of the other "famous crane shots"? Andrew does not elaborate on what is an important distinction to be made within these long takes: *a noticeable progression* in the feelings/meanings conveyed by the 'impermanence of time' that aligns with the film's theme of acceptance and its philosophy of circular temporality. The feelings and meanings that are conveyed in this final crane shot that moves laterally from Genjuro at the kiln, to Genichi at Miyagi's grave, and then up to the sky/farming community, embodies an acceptance on the part of Miyagi (or her spirit) toward Genjuro's greed-induced moral fall, and Genjuro's own acceptance of his lot in life as a simple, potter/craftsman. In one continuous movement and time, the camera links the family together by moving from Genjuro, to Genichi, to Miyagi, and then places them in a broader social and philosophical context with an upward tilt to the sky/farming community.

This is in contrast to the emotions/feelings expressed in earlier long takes that feature a similar shift from one fixed moment to another ('impermanent posturing'). An early example occurs in shot seven. The camera dollies in long shot following Miyagi, Genichi, and the Village Master as he warns them of the repercussions of "profiteering." This scene comes directly after Genjuro and Tobei have left to sell their pottery ware in the city. The Village Master tells Miyagi that they would be

better off preparing for the war, and that she should tell Genjuro this upon his return. The camera stops. After the Village Master finishes rendering his advice, he turns and walks away. Miyagi notices something offscreen right, and begins to run as the camera tracks right. Genjuro, pulling a crate, enters the frame right to greet them. He gleefully takes a handful of gold coins from his pouch and yells excitedly to Miyagi, “look at these!” Hence from one fixed moment to another the mood shifts within the long take from one of common sense prudence to greed-fueled desire and ambition. Two other striking examples are offered by the camera movements at the end of Scene 15 and Scene 16. The first comes at the end of the mysterious marriage, where the camera tracks left with Ukon after she tells Wakasa: “Come, take your beloved husband to the spring and give him a bath.” The camera loses Ukon behind a wall and continues in a symbiotic homomorphic long take that dissolves to an exterior location. By moving away from the fixed image of Wakasa’s bedroom, the shot in effect makes a moral judgement on the consummation of this unnatural marriage. A likewise emotion is imparted in the second example, which occurs in the exterior hot springs and features a camera movement that tracks left away from Genjuro rather than with him, as he moves toward an undressed Wakasa submerged in the springs. As critic Joan Mellen was the first to note, the movement away from the illicit liaison conveys a feeling of shame, as if “in moral judgement of their selfish love.”²⁵ In moving from these earlier examples to the ‘impermanent posturing’ of the final long take, we see a transition in meaning and/or emotion from greed, shame or moral condemnation to forgiveness and acceptance, a transition in keeping with the film’s overall

²⁵ *The Waves at Genji’s Door* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1976), 104. Keiko I. McDonald, acknowledging Mellen, writes, “At the moment when they are about to embrace in the spring, Mizoguchi’s camera moves uneasily. It quickly moves away from them and ends with a dissolve, as if to say that the director himself is averting his eyes from this spectacle of moral disarray,” *Ugetsu* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 14.

philosophical and thematic trajectory of reconciliation and regeneration within cyclical time.

The Long Take and Scene Construction

In this section I will conclude with some general comments on long take practice as it relates to scene construction and overall patterns of long take usage in *Ugetsu*. I will begin by presenting the table below that breaks the film's scenes down according to their dominant mode of construction:

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by Long Take Construction (18)</u>			
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
1.	32"	4	3	2'07"
3.	32"	3	2	1'35"
5.	1'23.5"	2	2	2'47"
8.	30.5"	11	6	5'36"
9.	29"	11	5	5'17"
12.	24"	8	4	3'09"
14.	33"	24	11	13'13"
15.	44"	3	2	2'12"
16.	27"	3	2	1'20"
17.	27"	3	2	1'20"
19.	1'42"	1	1	1'42"
22.	42"	9	6	6'21"
24.	1'11"	2	2	2'22"
26.	42"	4	3	2'46"
27.	1'29"	5	5	7'25"
28.	50"	3	2	2'29"
29.	40"	1	1	40"
30.	36"	6	4	3'35"

Total Time: 65'56" (70% of screen-time)

<u>Scenes Dominated by Editing Construction (6)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
2.	19"	1	0	19"
6.	21"	6	1	2'05"
7.	15"	17	3	4'14"
10.	15"	6	1	1'32"
13.	12"	14	2	2'44"
21.	19"	3	1	56"

Total Time: 11'50" (13% of screen-time)

<u>Scenes with a Mixed Mode of Construction (6)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
4.	25"	3	1	1'14"
11.	20"	11	3	3'45"
18.	27"	4	1	1'49"
20.	29"	4	1	1'57"
23.	26.5"	2	1	53"
25.	21"	19	5	6'40"

Total Time: 16'18" (17% of screen-time)

If compared to the breakdown of *The Magnificent Ambersons*, we can begin to see how the differences between the 'dialectical' and 'synthetic' modes of long take practice take shape over the course of a film's structure. Although there are some similar patterns in both films, the most obvious difference is that *Ugetsu* is far less weighted on editing as a mode of construction (which is not the same as saying that editing is unimportant). With an ASL 11" longer (29" to 18"), this is to be expected, but the scene breakdown underlines precisely how the difference plays itself out. While the percentage of screen-time occupied by scenes with a dominant long take construction is comparable, (70% *Ugetsu*, 61% *Ambersons*), as is aggregate screen-time of all combined long takes, (74% *Ugetsu*, 71% *Ambersons*), the rate veers in opposing directions for the amount of screen-time to scenes dominated by an editing mode of construction (13% *Ugetsu*, 33% *Ambersons*). If you add together the scenes

dominated by long take and mixed construction the percentage for *Ugetsu* jumps to 87%, compared to 67% for *Ambersons*. Which tells us that the synthetic long take practice incorporates editing *within* its long take practice, whereas in a dialectical long take practice the filmmaker is more likely to isolate editing from the long take (in clusters, in scenes without any long takes, etc.), as well as using it in tandem with the long take.

If you will spare me a momentary barrage of figures, in *Ugetsu* the number of long takes (83) represents 43% of the total shots, compared to 18% (50 long takes) for *The Magnificent Ambersons*. Yet, *The Magnificent Ambersons* has more shots of 1'00" or longer than *Ugetsu* (23 to 20, or 47% to 24.1%). In *The Magnificent Ambersons* this constitutes a higher percentage (8%) of the overall long takes than those in the 25" to 40" range (5%), or 41" to 59" range (4%). Whereas in *Ugetsu* the percentage range goes in the opposite direction: 21.2% in the 25" to 40" range, 11.4% in the 41" to 59" range, and 10.4% in the 1'00" plus range. While *Ugetsu* has more long takes and a longer ASL, *The Magnificent Ambersons* has 12 sequence shot scenes (scenes composed of a single long take), compared to only 2 in *Ugetsu* (ironic considering that Mizoguchi is famous for his one scene/one cut technique!). In *Ugetsu*, 97% of the scenes (all but one) have at least one long take, with an average of 2.8 per scene. In *The Magnificent Ambersons* the number is 84%, with an average of 1.3 per scene. These figures tell us that the dialectical practice is, in nature, much more prone to statistical extremities in both editing and long take; whereas the synthetic long take practice relies consistently on long take construction with a more moderate dependence on editing as dominant mode of scene construction. For example, *The Magnificent Ambersons* contains 187 shots under 10" in length, and 7 over 2'00" in length. Whereas *Ugetsu* has 32 shots under 10" and none over 2'00".

As noted in the *Ambersons* section, these percentages, along with other statistical facts, may be used as statistical benchmarks for categorizing other long take practitioners. This would require substantial empirical groundwork to verify the findings, but I would propose that figures could be established in certain key statistical categories such as ASL, Dominant Mode of Scene Construction, and Long Take percentages, that would help identify long take practice. For example, percentage of long takes to total shots, percentage of overall screen-time for scenes dominated by long take versus scenes dominated by editing, and percentage of long takes above/below 1'00" and/or under 10". (I will point the way with an increased database of sampled films in my conclusion.)

There are two patterns in long take practice noted in *The Magnificent Ambersons* that are also present in *Ugetsu*. Like in *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *Ugetsu*'s ASL slows down substantially as the film progresses (though not as drastically as in *The Magnificent Ambersons*). The ASL in the first half of the film (scenes 1-14) is 24.6". It slows to 37" in the second half of the film (scenes 15-30), and to 53" for the final 17'00". In *The Magnificent Ambersons* chapter, I explained this progression in terms of the film's narrative and thematic trajectory, which I will not do for *Ugetsu*. Rather, I wish to offer speculation for further research, or simply food for thought. When one thinks of the classic narrative structure, the image that often comes to mind is the (Griffithian) accelerated climax, or the movement toward resolution, or, in the least, the summation of the narrative energy. Narrative films like to begin and end on a bang. How, then, does this relate to a film's ASL? And is the slowing down of ASL noted in my two case study films a common (or rare?) characteristic of filmic narrative, or is it common only among films with a dominant long take practice?

The second noted pattern, perhaps more relevant for a general understanding of long take practice, is the placement of long takes in scene construction. As in *The Magnificent Ambersons*, there is a strong correlation between the long take and the start and end of scenes. Forty-six percent of *Ugetsu*'s long takes are either the first or last shots of a scene; and 90% of the scenes in *Ugetsu* either begin or end with a long take (62% and 78% respectively for *The Magnificent Ambersons*). And the statistics show that you are more likely to find the long take ending a scene than beginning one. For example, in *The Magnificent Ambersons* the breakdown is 19 (opening) to 25 (closing) (51% of the overall scenes compared to 68%, keeping in mind the 12 sequence shots where the long take is both the first and last shot); and in *Ugetsu* there are 18 long takes that open a scene (60%), and 22 that close a scene (73.3%). In general terms, as already noted, this tells us that the long take can be an effective formal tool for drawing a spectator into a scene, establishing a situation, plot point, or mood, and/or providing the time/space necessary for a spectator to retreat from the scene once its main point has been resolved, summarized, or elaborated.

Conclusion

Employing the two overarching formal patterns of movement and circularity, I have presented a close textual analysis of *Ugetsu*'s long take practice by paying special attention to the formal and thematic relationship between the long take and time. *Ugetsu* tells the story of familial moral fall during a period of great social strife. A central pattern used to express this theme is the consistent use of vertical movement, both of character and camera. This moral fall becomes a testing ground for the human spirit. Close textual analysis revealed how the formal treatment of

circularity, expressed through doublings, repetitions, and mirrorings, resolves this moral fall by offering a ray of hope through the regenerative powers of time and nature. An integral aspect of this (Buddhist) acceptance of life's hardships is the philosophical conception of cyclical time, which infuses the film's form at many levels: narrative structure, theme and meaning, camera movement, character blocking, and repetitions or doublings of scenes, events, dialogue, actions, and movements. In one especially telling form, through paralleling long takes featuring 'impermanent posturing' that reflect the philosophical journey of reconciliation and regeneration within cyclical time.

My analysis also demonstrates how *Ugetsu*'s long takes often express a philosophical challenge to conventional treatment of 'real time.' For example, moments where the camera movement takes us through time, or initiates an ontological shift from real natural time to supernatural (or fantasy) time. In many such cases, movement becomes an expression of time (time passed, time passing, time lost [*sabi*],²⁶ or time standing still), yet the movement need not be understood only through material evidence. Like shot 183, for example, where the camera remains static, while the shot's changing light takes us from night to day in a matter of seconds. In all of these shots, internal time (mise-en-scène, movement, sound, etc.) and external time (shot duration) interact to affect a particular impression of time and meaning; the long takes in question reflect how a character may be experiencing time at that moment, or how the particulars of the narrative moment dictate how time is to be structured.

²⁶ In addition to Tarkovsky's definition, according to Murasaki Shikibu, "*Sabi* was a very old word, found as far back as the *Manyōshū* where it has the meaning of 'to be desolate.' It later acquired the meaning of 'to grow old' and is related to the word 'to grow rusty.' "On the Art of the Novel," ed. WM. Theodore de Bary, in *Japanese Aesthetics and Culture*, 53, Nancy G. Hume, ed., Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995.

Paralleling the question of real time, my close textual analysis also reveals how in some cases a long take's complex treatment of time and narration escapes easy classification as either automorphic or homomorphic representation of time. An example being the first long take in the Homecoming scene, where it appears that we have travelled back in time to when Miyagi was alive (homomorphic time). This is a possible reading of the scene as we first experience it. However, over the next few scenes we find out that indeed Miyagi is dead, and the image we saw was of her ghost or spirit. So retroactively the time must be seen as automorphic, with the temporal anomaly expressed in the movement from natural to supernatural time. While in the case of the final long take of this scene, the decision as to whether the event has been automorphic or homomorphic rests on the noted interpretive turn.

The statistical analysis of the long take and scene construction confirms patterns already noted in *The Magnificent Ambersons* concerning the strong correlation between the long take and the opening and closing of scenes, and an ASL that grows slower as the film progresses. Contextual statistical analysis also confirms a strong correlation between the long take and the thematic occurrence of 'falls' and 'rises' (the abject and the elevated). My contextual statistical analysis (CSA) suggests that figurative norms in such areas as ASL, Dominant Mode of Scene Construction, and Long Take percentages, can help us to identify and better understand long take practice.

Chapter 9: Radical Long Take Practice: Andrei Tarkovsky's *Stalker*:

- Introduction
- Establishing 'Drab Time'
- Durational Complexity
 - Durational Complexity Through Minimalism and Memory*
 - Internalised/Externalised Subjectivity*
- Creation Time
 - Creation Time Beyond the 'Zone'*
- The Long Take and Scene Construction
- Conclusion

CHAPTER 9

Introduction

In this final case study chapter I will again be using close formal-textual analysis to discuss those scenes and moments where the long take and time interact at the level of theme, meaning, form and structure. As with my two previous case studies, the general point is that, with certain films, a concerted analysis of the long take and time will yield novel insights by articulating how time is formally inscribed in the film's narrative, theme, or more general philosophical 'world-view'. The science fiction film *Stalker* is structured as a physical/metaphysical journey for three men in search of inner truth and self-worth. Their search takes them to a restricted area outside the city limits, the Zone, where it is believed aliens once visited. The Zone is a minefield of perceptual illusions, booby traps, and shifting geography, making each step a potentially life-threatening danger. It has been officially recognized as a forbidden area by the government ever since an investigative group went missing. Legend has it, however, that nestled within the danger-ridden Zone is a room where one's deep inner wishes are granted. The Stalker (Alexander Kaidanovsky) is trained as a guide for people willing to risk their life to reach this wish fulfilling room. His latest 'clients' are a Writer (Anatoly Solonitsyn) and a Scientist (Nikolai Grinko). Stripped of their self-confidence, faith and ability to love, the room represents, perhaps, their final hope.

After weathering the death traps along their path, the men arrive at the threshold of the room. We learn that the Scientist had planned all along to destroy the room with a bomb, fearing that it may be misused for evil intention. The Stalker makes a frantic plea to let the room exist, as it represents for many the last depository

of faith. Shaken and crying, the Stalker is reduced to a pathetic state. The Scientist dismantles the bomb. Exhausted, the three men sit quietly outside the room. Neither have the courage to venture into the room and test their inner selves. They return to their urban wasteland as they left, seemingly bereft of spirit or hope. The three men sit still and quiet in the café where they met at the beginning of the film. The Stalker's wife (Alyssa Freindlikh), along with their crippled, mutant daughter 'Monkey' (Natasha Abramova), comes to collect her husband at the café. Upon returning to their squalid home, the Stalker burdens his wife with his growing despair in the face of the cynical travellers. The film concludes with the Stalker's mute daughter, Monkey, performing what appears to be a magical feat of telekinesis by willing a group of glasses to move across the kitchen table.

Many writers have pointed to how important time is to Tarkovsky's film style.¹ This much is evident simply from the title of his book, *Sculpting in Time*.² Yet none have, as I will set out to do, rigorously described just how this philosophical importance of time is inscribed formally, textually, and thematically through his long

¹Including my own "Time and the Film Aesthetics of Andrei Tarkovsky," *Canadian Journal of Film Studies/Revue canadienne d'études cinématographiques* Volume 2 No. 1, 1992, 21-30. As Tarkovsky writes, "Time, printed in its factual forms and manifestations: such is the supreme idea of cinema as an art... On that I build my working hypothesis, both practical and theoretical" (63). One of the main points concerning Tarkovsky's time-based aesthetics is what he calls the "time-pressure" or "time-thrust" running through every shot which, for him, is the main formative element of his cinema. Actually, no one has written more eloquently than Andrei Tarkovsky on the importance that the concept of time holds in his overall aesthetic, philosophy, and film style. Tarkovsky's philosophical and moral views on time and film time can be found in his book *Sculpting in Time: Reflections on the Cinema*. Translated by Kitty Hunter-Blair. (London: The Bodley Head, 1986). Especially relevant are the sections, Chapter 3 "Imprinted Time," pages 57-80, and Chapter 5 "Time, rhythm and editing," pages 113-134. For an in-depth exposition of Tarkovsky's book I refer the reader to my review essay, "Art For All 'Time': Andrei Tarkovsky's *Sculpting in Time*," *Film-Philosophy*, February 2000, vol. 4 no. 4, [journal on-line]; available from <http://www.mailbase.ac.uk/lists/film-philosophy/files/totaro.html>. The best book length study on Tarkovsky to date is: Vida T. Johnson and Graham Petrie, *The Films of Andrei Tarkovsky: A Visual Fugue* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994). For a detailed review essay of this book I refer the reader to: Donato Totaro, *The Films of Andrei Tarkovsky*, Graham Petrie & Vida T. Johnson, "Review Essay" *Canadian Journal of Film Studies/Revue canadienne d'études cinématographiques*, Vol. 4 No. 2, Fall 1995, 51-59. There are three other English-language books on the late Russian director, Peter Green's *Andrei Tarkovsky: A Winding Quest*. (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), Mark Le Fanu's *The Cinema of Andrei Tarkovsky* (London: British Film Institute, 1987), and the translation of Maya Turovskaya, *Tarkovsky: Cinema as Poetry* (1989). There are also several in French and Italian.

² The French translation for this book is *Le temps scellé*.

takes across respective films. Even with the substantial material that has been written on *Stalker*, my concentration on the multi-leveled interaction of time within the long takes will produce a novel reading of *Stalker*. The central thematic/philosophical meaning which I will explicate through close textual analysis is that as *Stalker* progresses, time in the long take becomes an *expression of creation and invention*. Through the slow unfolding of time in the long take, the audience experiences, sometimes along with the characters, the sense of something magical or wondrous occurring in their presence. This sense of 'time-as-creation' has a narrative-thematic development across the film's triad structure: in the city before entering the Zone (scenes 1-6); the journey to the Zone and in the Zone (scenes 7-18); and back in the city (scenes 19-22). In support of this central reading are secondary readings concerning the particular qualities that render the long takes in *Stalker* their 'slow' temporal tonality and durational complexity (these often being interrelated).

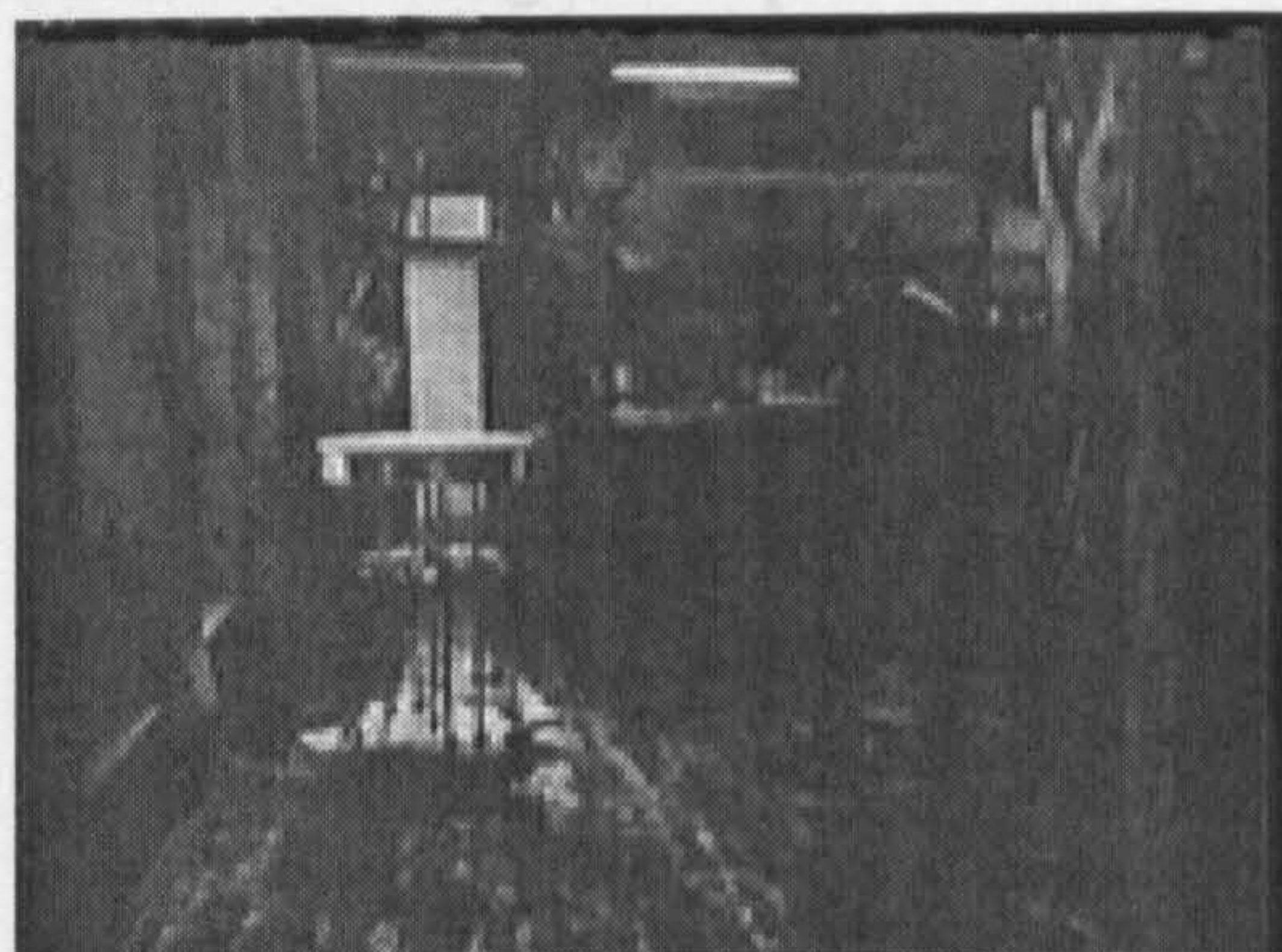
Establishing 'Drab Time'

Stalker begins with a static long take of 3'11" that immediately establishes the drab, lifeless mood that permeates the 'real world' of the fictional city. The camera is placed inside a dark, dingy bar. We see a table in the middle ground and a door in the background. A bartender enters through the door and walks off-screen right. A second man, the Scientist (or Professor), enters from the left foreground, walks to the bar, and then settles at the table. The bartender leaves through the back door. This is all the 'action' that takes place. The lack of a conventional narrative development makes it difficult to articulate whether the cinematic time we are experiencing is automorphic or homomorphic. This physical (characters and camera) and narrative stasis suggests

the arrested emotional and spiritual state we will find the Writer and the Scientist in. The one-shot scene cuts to black and is followed by a second long take (35'') inter-title that introduces what will become the emotional and ontological counterpart to the 'city/reality', the Zone:

What was it? A meteorite that fell to earth? Or a visitation from outer space? Whatever it was, there appeared in our small land, a miracle of miracles: the Zone. We sent in troops, none returned. Then we surrounded the Zone with police cordons. We did right...Although I'm not sure...

—From an interview with Prof. Wallace, Nobel Prize Winner for RAI Press



Opening 'Drab' Time Shot

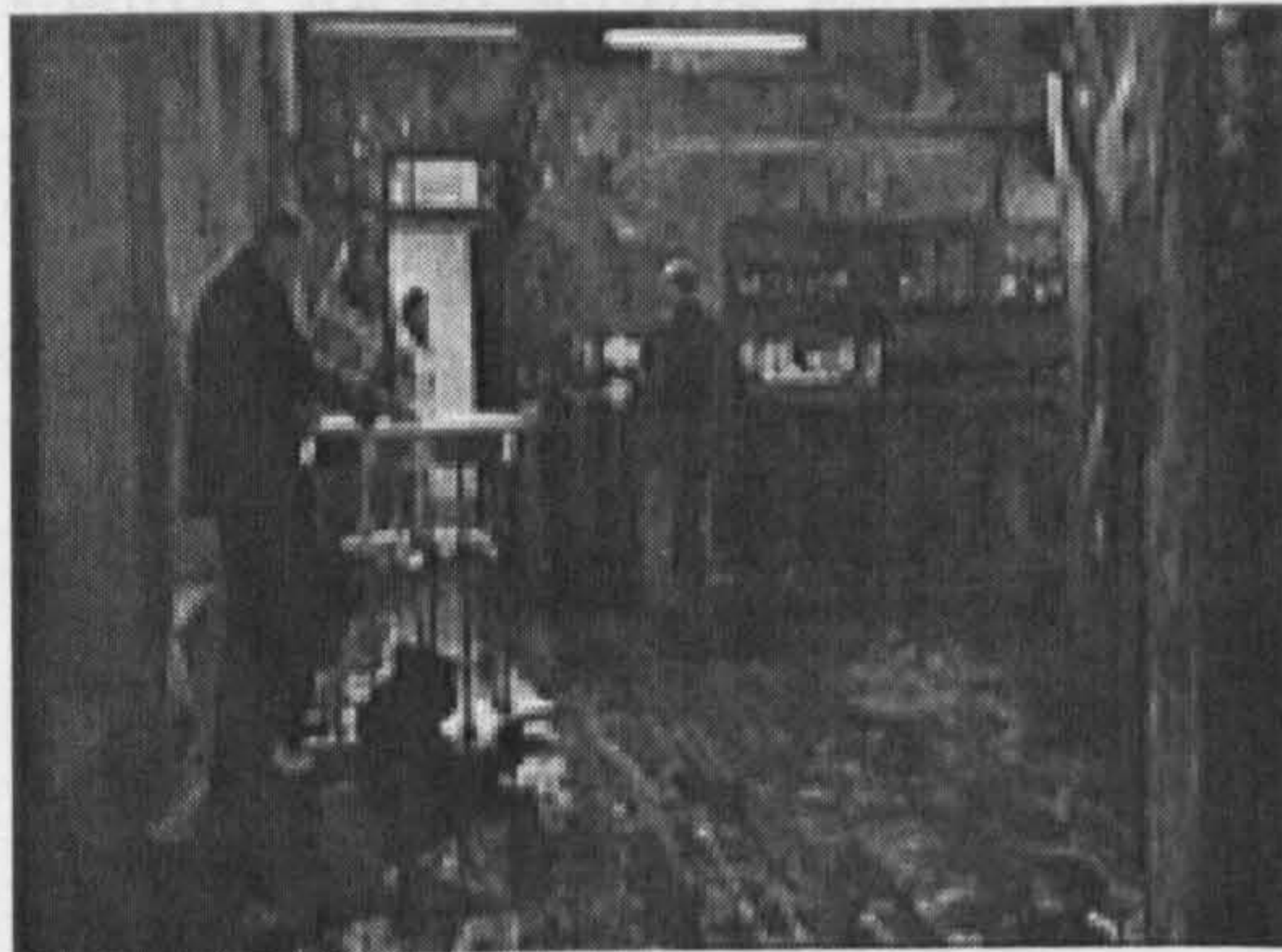
The sense of 'drab' time is carried over into the next shot/scene (3/3), a long take of 1'13'' where the camera dollies in ever so slowly toward a set of ajar double doors in the Stalker's bunker-like apartment. Though we are in a different location, the low key lighting and dank art direction echo that of the bar. The camera passes through the door into the bedroom. Two figures can be made out under the bed covers. We hear the distant rumbling of an oncoming train. The scene cuts to an overhead shot of a small, round night table. Vibrations from the approaching train cause the table and objects to vibrate. From this overhead angle, the camera slowly tracks laterally left over the figures lying in the bed, a woman, a sleeping girl, and the Stalker, then retraces its movement back to where it started (with the vibrations now subsided).

Two things relative to the long take and time can be said about these opening scenes that reflect general points of the film: agonizingly slow camera movements into space and direct overhead camera angles that move perpendicular to the ground/floor/objects. These two inter-related qualities (since some of the overhead shots are also slow moving) affect the quality of time (internal time and temporal tonality) and the spectator's subjective experience of the shot's time. This quality of 'slow' time is also achieved with static long takes, but for the moment, I am concerned with long takes that feature extremely slow inward movements. This 'slow' movement achieves a temporal tonality whose engagement is 'contemplative,' partly because the length and pace of the shot seems ill-fitted to the narrative and dramatic information. The 'sense of purposiveness' in the shot is not immediately apparent, but gains its power cumulatively.

There are five such long takes that feature extremely slow inward movement: shots 3, 14, 115, 119, and 133. Shot 115, one of the film's most important long takes, will be discussed later. Shots 14 and 133 take place in the bar. In shot 14 the camera returns to the same position in the bar as the opening shot. The Scientist is seated at the small, round table, and the Stalker at the bar in the background. The Writer enters past camera from the left foreground. Several seconds into the shot the camera begins to dolly forward at a barely perceptible speed, eventually stopping at a MCU of the Stalker. Over the course of the 4'42" shot the camera has slowly and incrementally moved from an extreme LS of the three characters to a MCU of the Stalker, with the other two characters having left the frame.

Shot 133, considerably shorter at 1'15", returns us to the same position inside the bar after returning from the journey. The Stalker's wife has come to meet her husband. The shot seems to begin as the wife's point of view looking into the bar,

from same angle and position as in opening scene. We see the three men seated around the dimly lit round table in the middle of the bar. The only index that they actually left the bar is the presence of the black dog from the Zone. The bartender, wearing the same white coat as in the opening shot, is in the background. They all look in the direction of the camera, which seems to confirm that this is a point of view shot. We hear shuffling of footsteps, yet the camera movement forward is slow and mannered, unlike human movement. Then the Stalker's wife walks into frame toward the men, shifting the point of view to an objective perspective. There are other long takes in *Stalker* where the camera moves inward at such a slow, barely perceptible pace. This retarded movement forward has an interesting affect on the shot's presentation of time.



Opening & Closing Moments of Shot 14: Durational Complexity

There are two points in this respect that I want to bring out:

- 1) The manner in which these long takes exhibit 'durational complexity' ('slow' yet compelling temporal tonality)
- 2) How they manipulate conventional notions of 'subjectivity' and exhibit a foregrounded or heightened time

¹ Vlada Pavlov, "Tarkovsky's Dream Imagery," *Film Quarterly*, vol. 43, no. 1 (Winter 1993-94), 29.

Durational Complexity

Vlada Petric points to two types of camera movements in *Stalker* (and *Mirror*): lateral movements with telephoto lenses that obscure all but one plane of the image and overhead perpendicular tracking movements over objects and spaces (often nature).³ The latter camera movement is used emphatically in *Stalker*. (Such as the one over the stream during the Stalker's dream, shot 88, or shots 4, 72, and 131, some of which will be discussed later.) Petric notes that this movement (along with other aspects of the mise-en-scène) 'estranges' the objects recorded by placing us in a physical position we rarely assume in reality. Tarkovsky often uses this camera movement, in conjunction with other formal elements such as sound, as a unique signifier for dream-time and subjective states. In some instances, as in the Stalker's lakeside dream, the movement can be said to be approximating an out-of-body experience. In these and other cases, the effect is a form of estrangement from natural and everyday objects.

In a similar sense, the agonizingly slow camera movements inward are a form of 'temporal estrangement', largely because we have no physical correlative in our real-life experience of moving at such a retarded pace. Relative to our perceptual-schemata, the faster the camera moves, the more it compresses the intervening space and shortens the time; the slower the movement and the *longer* time feels. And most camera movements, unless dictated by a specific context, like being mounted in front of a moving car or in a helicopter, fall between our normal sense of moving through space. All things being equal, cinema conventions dictate that unless we are told otherwise by strict codes, such as slow/fast motion, freeze frames, the use of extreme

³ Vlada Petric, "Tarkovsky's Dream Imagery," *Film Quarterly*, vol. 43, no.2, (Winter 1989-90), 29.

long/short lenses, etc., the passing of time and movement exist in a state comparable to how we would perceive them in reality. “A film to all appearances perfectly reproduces the movement of the physical world in its temporal aspect. We see a man walking, a tree waving in the breeze, or a horse jumping, at exactly the same speed on the screen as we would in real life.”⁴ But the deliberate and extremely slow camera movements in *Stalker*, in concert with character stasis and little kinetic energy, function to retard our normal perception of time; they alter the convention of “normal” or “physical” time (our perceptual schemata), by reducing movement to a speed alien to most film viewing experiences. In fact, to find movement at such a retarded pace in our normal everyday experience would entail unusual situations or very particular forms of attention (daydreaming, extreme concentration, fixation, decreased arousal states such as being inebriated or drugged, etc.). This ‘temporal estrangement’ is strongly implicated in their durational complexity: slow, foregrounded time that may be experienced as ‘time standing still,’ or as feeling longer or shorter than its sheer external time. Hence we have a situation where a shot may represent automorphic time, yet still render an ambiguous or subjective temporal experience.

Durational Complexity Through Minimalism

I will expand on this notion of temporal estrangement by bringing in a form of music whose history is, interestingly enough, contemporaneous with Tarkovsky’s career (and radical long take practice): minimalism. Some writers have referred to Tarkovsky’s later films (*Stalker*, *Nostalghia*, *The Sacrifice*) as bearing a ‘minimalist’

⁴ Ralph Stephenson and J.R. Debrix. *Cinema as Art*, 2d ed. (Penguin Books: London, 1965), 104.

style.⁵ By this they mean non-varied camera style, simple plot, understated use of music, limited narrative development, and little conventional 'action'. However, no one has articulated or developed the implication the term minimalism may have to the particular sense of time in Tarkovsky's long takes. This is because the application of minimalism has been in its quotidian sense rather than the musical-historical formal sense. As I will demonstrate, the parallel to minimalist musical form may have an important relevance to an understanding of the temporal dimension of *Stalker*'s noted slow-moving long takes.

Minimalism is a term in currency since the early 1970's used to define various compositional practices, "the features of which -static harmony, patterned rhythms and repetition- aim radically to reduce the range of compositional materials."⁶ Relevant to my cinematic context is that when listening to a typical minimalist composition what is most striking to the listener, or what we are most conscious of, is this sense of a restricted musical palette, through repetition and/or stasis. Yet if you compare the opening passage of most minimalist musical pieces to the ending, there will be a noticeable difference in instrumentation, notation, rhythm, pitch, or tempo. This *gradual* change is an important aesthetic feature of minimalist music. Steve Reich, a leading minimalist composer, called one of his live musical performances (*Drumming* 1971) 'music as a gradual process'.⁷ The reason for our not being very

⁵Peter Green notes in Tarkovsky's later films, "a progressive reduction or refinement of means [which] can be observed in the camerawork and cutting, and in Tarkovsky's use of music." *Andrei Tarkovsky: The Winding Quest*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993, 14. Maya Turovskaya writes, "The cinematic element is simplified, but it is also impoverished...looking back at *Stalker* from the perspective of the later films, I would still characterize it as 'minimalist.' " (*Tarkovsky: Cinema as Poetry*. Natasha Ward, trans. (London: Faber and Faber, 1989), 109. However, as Graham Petrie and Vida T. Johnson note, this gives the wrong impression, almost a pejorative flavor, since the film is "one of the most visually and aurally complex of all Tarkovsky's films." Hence it may have a stripped-down quality, but is hardly 'simple,' which may be the impression given by the term minimalism. As I argue above, minimalism is a formal choice with a certain aim in mind, and is not necessarily simpler or 'more difficult' than a more varied formal choice.

⁶ *The Grove Concise Dictionary of Music*. ed. Stanley Sadie, assist. ed., Alison Latham (London: MacMillan Publishers Ltd, 1988 [1994]), 525.

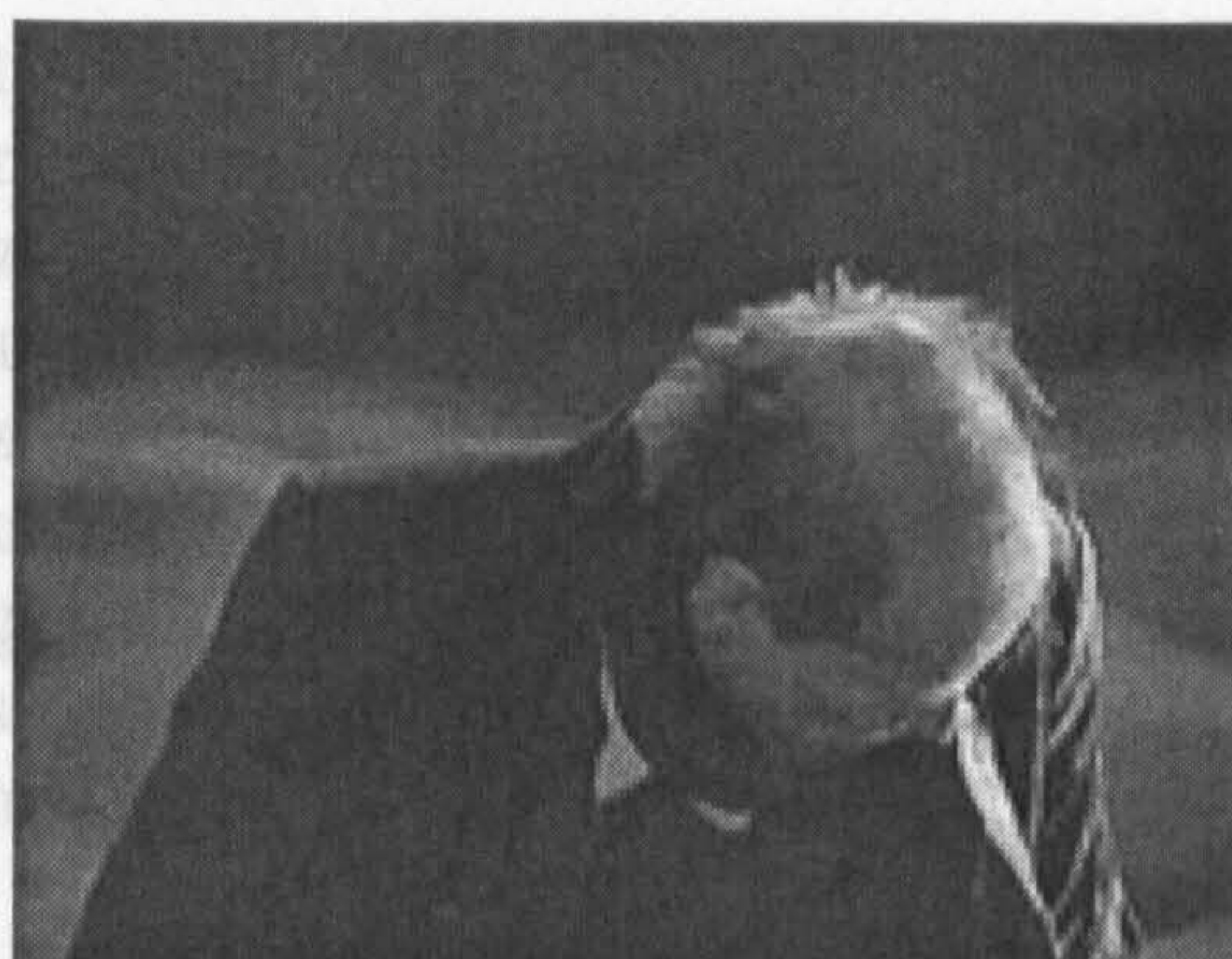
⁷ Ibid.

aware of these differences through the course of listening to the composition is that the change(s) has been brought about *incrementally*. The change is only, or mostly, noticeable when you compare the opening of the musical piece to the closing.⁸

A similar effect is achieved in some of the agonizingly slow long takes in *Stalker*. If we compare the first frame to the last frame in shots 14, 115, 119, and 133, there will be an appreciable difference in either scale, lighting, framing, etc. For example, in shot 14 (4'42") described earlier (see photos on page 247). In shot 115 (4'35"), the camera travels from a long shot of the Writer lying on the ground amid sand dunes, with a well jutting behind him, to a medium close up of the Writer seated on the well. In shot 119 (7'08") the camera zooms in from an extreme long three-shot of the men framed through a door, to medium close-up shots of, respectively, the Scientist and then the Writer. And in shot 133 (1'15"), the camera dollies from a point of view long shot of the three men seated at the table in the bar to a medium shot. Hence in each of these examples, change occurs from the beginning to end at a remarkably measured pace.

As in a minimalist musical piece, we are not aware of this change *at every instance* because it occurs so gradually. To bring out a second related point, change is often acknowledged as an important element of time. As William James put it, "Awareness of change is...the condition on which our perception of time's flow depends."⁹ If this is true then "time's flow" is *relative to* the conscious awareness of change. I realise that how change is perceived in a minimalist piece will be dependent on the level of musical sophistication on the listener's part. But even the most

⁸ Other important minimalist musicians/bands include Tangerine Dream, Klaus Schulze, Manuel Göttsching (formerly Ash Ra Tempel), Philip Glass, Michael Nyman, Brian Eno, Morton Feldman, John Cage, Bill Nelson, and Harold Budd. It is interesting to note that contemporaneous with this musical movement there were filmmakers also experimenting cinematically with minimalism through protracted long takes, static framing, electronic music, looping, rephotography, and other formal qualities (Andy Warhol, Chantal Akerman, Jean-Marie Straub & Danièle Huillet, and Michael Snow).



sophisticated listener of a minimalist piece can only be aware of the change *gradually*. While the less sophisticated viewer may not be consciously or overtly aware of the gradual changes. In any case, if the flow of time is dependent on the rate at which change is perceived, as Williams James observed, then we can hypothesize that the rate at which time is perceived in Tarkovsky's agonizingly slow camera movements is effected relative to our awareness of change in them (granting these basic formal similarities to minimalist music). As our awareness of change is 'slowed' down, then so too is our awareness of time passing. I realize this is speculative, but I offer this hypothesis as one possible explanation for why the slow, contemplative temporal tonality in *Stalker* does not produce the sensation of 'eternity' (at least in this viewer).¹⁰

This notion of a slow, gradual awareness of change can also be related to clinical studies on other factors effecting time estimation. Based on empirical

⁹Quoted in Peter Hartocollis, *Time and Timelessness* (New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1983), 3.

¹⁰ Writer Mark Le Fanu explains the effect of what I am calling durational complexity on him when he asks of the *Stalker* trolley scene, "Why isn't the scene boring if nothing at all happens in it?" His response: "The scene, paradoxically, is full of human interest. Tarkovsky, you could say, takes his time, almost uniquely in modern cinema, to look at men's faces inquisitively. His gaze is not of the type that we call psychological but ... related to sculpture and painting." *The Cinema of Andrei Tarkovsky* (London: British Film Institute, 1987), 93. Hence a 'pleasure' that can be called 'counter-diegetic descriptive time.'

laboratory studies, Joseph E. McGrath and Janice R. Kelly note that:

...when changes in rate of apparent passage of time are produced by increasing or decreasing arousal levels (e.g., by drugs that increase excitation or tranquilize), then the effects seem to be opposite to those noted above [stimulus-rich intervals = fast time, stimulus-impooverished intervals = slow time]. It is as if drugs and other conditions altered the operation of some kind of internal clock (or counter) –speeding it or slowing it in relation to the “outside” clock (which the experimenter is using to decide whether the subject's judgement of amount of time passed is an overestimate or an underestimate).¹¹

Hence the extreme slow pace of certain long takes in *Stalker* that contain the process of ‘minimal’ gradual change, place the viewer in a ‘drug-like,’ semi-tranquilized, or semi-somnolent state which decreases their metabolism and ‘slows’ down their inner clock in relation to external time. The result being that the slowly paced long take appears, relative to their slowed down internal clock, to be moving ‘quickly.’¹² In this situation we clearly have a temporal tonality where the nature of long take engagement is “contemplative, passive, sensual, and intermittent.”

To continue in this speculative vein, a second possible explanation, one relevant to extremely long takes (say 4’00” or longer), can be made based on the effect that short term and long term memory have on the judgement of duration. Psychological studies have shown that ‘full’ moments are experienced as passing quickly, while moments with little activity feel long.¹³ We can think of this

¹¹ Ibid.

¹²I admit this is highly conjectural, but I am not the first person to make parallels between certain forms of art and altered or heightened states of consciousness. The film critic Parker Tyler in fact coined the term ‘drug-time’ in reference to Andy Warhol's early experimental narrative films (quoted in Peter Gidal. *Andy Warhol*. (London: Dutton Pictureback, 1971), 90). And, as noted in Chapter 3, Phillip Lopate in his collection of essays *Totally, Tenderly, Tragically* (New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1998) discusses the mise-en-scène style of certain directors as allowing him the spectatorial space to disengage from the events on the screen and attain a form of meditative state: “...this style ... allowed more of a spiritual, contemplative feeling to accumulate than the rapid montage style....” (11-12).

¹³“Stimulus-enriched intervals seem to pass faster than intervals with little stimulation in them. That is, intervals during which there is more stimulation than “usual” are experienced as shorter than relatively empty intervals.” Joseph E. McGrath & Janice R. Kelly, *Time & Human Interaction: Toward a Social Psychology of Time* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1986), 75.

immediate, 'present' experience as short-term memory. However, when these events slip into the past and become the province of long term memory, the time experience reverses, so that "...such "busy" intervals are *remembered* as if they were longer, while empty intervals are remembered as if they were shorter, than they "actually" were (as measured by objective clock time)."¹⁴ The reason for this is because when we recall the stimulus-enriched interval there is much to remember, hence its duration, in temporal hindsight, is lengthened; while the duration of the empty interval which felt long in passing, is remembered as short because there is little to actually recall.¹⁵ In relating this to film, my hypothesis is that in extremely long takes with little stimuli or kinetic energy, like the ones in *Stalker*, the sense of time paradox and durational complexity occurs as a result of both long-term and short-term memory being activated. So that by the time we arrive at the end of the long take our long-term memory, with little overt stimuli to recall, overwhelms the *longeur* of short-term memory and renders an overall temporal experience of short duration (a form of temporal foreshortening).

To conclude with these slow paced or 'minimalist' long takes, although the excessively slow movements can not be equated identically with the 'timelessness' of a moving image which has shifted to a still image (the classic freeze frame), such extremely slow inward camera movements can barely be differentiated from slow motion cinematography, where, like the freeze frame, narrative time 'bends' from physical, screen time. In terms of temporal perspective, these slowly moving long takes seem caught somewhere between the 'timeless' quality of the freeze frame effect and the temporal distention of slow motion cinematography.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Internalised/Externalised Subjectivity

It should be noted ... that the “dead” periods (pauses) frequently used in contemporary films have nothing in common with the “empty” periods of waiting or boredom.... it is quite usual in these moments of *dramatic* inaction for something *genuinely* to be taking place. The duration is filled with mental if not physical (or verbal) activity.¹⁶

This form of mental ‘action’ occurs on several occasions in *Stalker*, where an internalised experience of time is engaged. However, in *Stalker* the nature of subjectivity varies and goes beyond simple reproduction of “mental activity”.

Stalker presents two variations on subjectivity:

- 1) internalised subjectivity: where we can reasonably conclude that the imagery is a manifestation of a character’s thoughts or dreams
- 2) externalised subjectivity: a displacement of a character’s perceptual or physical state onto formal features of the shot that suggest a subjective emotional state (shots 14, 43, and 115)

An example of externalised subjectivity is the cut that ends the Trolley Journey (scene 7) and initiates the arrival into the Zone (shot 42). The shot feels like a conventional point of view shot, but is not coded as one, as the next cut shows us a long shot of the three men on the flatcar. The first striking quality we notice is that the film has changed from drab black & white/sepia to color. The camera pans right to left to take in the surrounding landscape then stops as the sound of the trolley comes to a stop. The shot lingers for a few seconds on the image of trees and a hazy rural

¹⁶ Jean Mitry. *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, trans. Christopher King. (Bloomington and Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1997), 362.

landscape in the extreme background. It then pans very slowly right and stops at a cross-shaped telegraph pole in the foreground and an abandoned truck in the mid-ground, then ends with a cut to a shot of the three men still seated on the trolley.

As noted in Chapter 3, this long take (41'') is not driven by a specific narrative purpose, and lacks any sense of teleology. It is a space pan¹⁷ that seems to function as an establishing shot of the Zone. However, the lingering, contemplative nature of the shot signals the 'heightened' emotional awareness of the Stalker's character, who clearly feels at home in the Zone and spiritually at ease in its environment. The languid pace of the movement functions as a form of displaced (externalised) subjectivity. The slow, deliberateness of the shot reflects how the Stalker wants time to pass in the Zone -slowly- to last forever. This languid pace is carried over into the next shot (shot 43, 4'21''), where the Stalker stretches out his arms and says, "Well, we're home. How still it is. This is one of the quietest places on earth. It's so beautiful. There's no one here." His symbiotic relationship with the Zone is visually suggested in shot 45, where he is filmed standing amidst waist high reeds, enwrapped by the Zone's alien yet natural landscape. Hence the initial shot 42 is a long take with "dramatic inaction" but with something still "genuinely...taking place" through the "manifestation of inner mental activity unwilling (or unable) to express itself". Another long take that features 'externalised subjectivity' without dramatic action or suggestions of mental activity is the earlier discussed opening shot of the film, where an overall lack of kinetic action/energy represents the arrested internal states of the Writer and the Scientist. In both these cases the felt experience of time is shaped by an externalised formal manifestation of subjectivity.

¹⁷ A term coined by Concordia University film professor John Locke to describe a camera movement that registers objects, settings, or spaces without human characters.

As discussed in Chapter three, the sense of movement as it exists within an individual long take, or the teleology of a shot, can affect a spectator's perception of time. The long takes in *Stalker* do not have the same sense of teleology or end purpose as in popular cinema, with the sense of 'where' the long take is heading being directly related to questions of narrative (plot exposition or development), emotion (suspense or fear, for example), or character interest (subjective point of view, eyeline glance, etc.). In *Stalker* the sense of teleology is often conditioned by the above noted internalised or externalised subjectivity, and the ontological uncertainty surrounding this (is it subjective or not?). The scene I have entitled "the Stalker's Apocalyptic Dream" (scene 13) is an excellent example of how ontological uncertainty affects the sense of teleology in a long take. Two long takes in this scene, shots 86 and 88, contain an ambiguous teleology, where the viewer is at a loss as to where the camera movement is heading, or when it will end.

To begin, the first shot of the scene, shot 86, has no apparent relationship to the previous shots of the Stalker, Scientist, and Writer lying near the tiled room, engaged in philosophical discussion. The shot presents a new, previously unseen landscape, a space whose status is unknown. Trees are visible in the extreme background, and a dust cloud rises and moves toward the foreground. A patch of vegetation is nestled among an earthy, moss-filled ground which seems to ripple in the foreground. Wind-blown smoke rises off the water, mixing with floating dandelions that render the scene a primordial feel. The camera pans left in the direction of the wind and smoke clouds.¹⁸ The long take (32") ends with a cut to a close-up of the Stalker (shot 87), with his eyes wide open, staring as if awakened from a shocking dream.

¹⁸This is an excellent example of Tarkovsky's nature-dependent time-pressure.

This is one of the film's most enigmatic and evocative long takes, abruptly severing our time with the three travellers. All we hear on the soundtrack is wind, while the camera moves in synch with nature. The ground which moves like rippling sea waves renders the physicality of the space unusual and mysterious: a space that could be part of the Zone or the Stalker's dreamscape. The shot is divorced from the previous shot, "incommensurable" or "non-commensurable" as Gilles Deleuze would call it, and not only lacks a strong teleology but is difficult to identify narratively. For example, given the shot's noted primordial qualities, one wonders whether it is meant to represent the creation of the universe and the beginning of time? However, even though we do not know the meaning or ontological nature of the space represented, or the teleology of the movement, spectator interest is maintained by the sensuous properties of the shot (counter-diegetic descriptive time).

But this ambiguity and uncertainty is soon dispelled by a female voice-over we hear in the next shot (87): "...and behold there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sack cloth. The full moon became like blood." According to Petrie and Johnson, "the passage is from Revelation 6:12-17 about the opening of the sixth seal, the destruction of Heaven and Earth, and the vain attempt by the survivors to hide themselves from 'the wrath of the Lamb'."¹⁹ This voice-over now renders meaning to the previous shot, making it very likely the Stalker's dream image of a Biblical apocalyptic event (the earthquake explains the quivering ground).²⁰ The diegetic status of the female voice is interesting. Petrie and Johnson suggest that the voice may be that of the Stalker's wife, which would make sense with the reading of

¹⁹ According to Graham Petrie and Vida T. Johnson, "the passage is from Revelation 6:12-17 about the opening of the sixth seal, the destruction of Heaven and Earth, and the vain attempt by the survivors to hide themselves from 'the wrath of the Lamb' " *The Films of Andrei Tarkovsky: A Visual Fugue* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), 145.

²⁰ One could interpret this image as emanating from the Zone, and liken it to the image of the Russian dacha at the end of *Solaris* that is a physical projection from the sentient planet Solaris' surface.

the previous shot as the Stalker's dream. But making the voice-over female also fits in with the role of women in Tarkovsky's films as moral and spiritual torchbearers (as is the Stalker's wife).²¹

This cut from the enigmatic long take to the (somewhat) explanatory voice-over functions similarly to the cut at the end of the 'Momentous Time' scene in *Ugetsu*, which retroactively explains an ontological uncertainty. In *Ugetsu* the cut resolves the ontology of the scene's temporality by returning us from supernatural time back to natural time. In *Stalker* the cut retroactively explains the meaning of the previous long take's ambiguous ontological state by positing it as the Stalker's apocalyptic dream.

The next long take (shot 88) in this scene (13), which at 3'26" is considerably longer than the previous long take, presents an even more enigmatic and perplexing teleology. The camera is close-up on a dark object, indistinguishable until it tilts up to reveal the Stalker's sleeping face. The camera pans away from the Stalker's face to a stream of clear, shallow water and begins to slowly track perpendicularly over a series of objects submerged under the water: a hypodermic needle, a chrome plate, a small fish in a bowl, an aluminum box containing dirt and coins, a screwdriver, a Christ Icon (Jan Van Eyck's Ghent altarpiece²²), a pistol, black and white tiles, a spring coil, pages of a calendar, a clockwork mechanism, and then finally to an upturned hand resting in the water. The camera pulls back slightly, tilts up to reveal a green sweater sleeve and dark leather coat. Is this the Stalker's hand? Spatial logic dictates that it

²¹ To quote from myself, "Regarding sexual politics, it is fruitless to try and recuperate Tarkovsky's representation of women from any standpoint outside of Tarkovsky's old-school patriarchal moral value system. In Tarkovsky's film world women are determined by their biological roles. There are no positive representations of working women in Tarkovsky's films. They do, however, constitute an important part of Tarkovsky's moral world. Hari from *Solaris*, the Stalker's wife, and the "witch" from *The Sacrifice* are martyr-like figures whose acts of devotion or self-sacrifice place them high in Tarkovsky's moral system." *The Films of Andrei Tarkovsky*, Graham Petrie & Vida T. Johnson, "Review Essay," *Canadian Journal of Film Studies/Revue canadienne d'études cinématographiques*, Vol. 4 No. 2, (Fall 1995): 55-56.

can not be, since the camera travelled in a straight line. However, if observant we will remember (or soon notice) that only the Stalker is wearing such clothing, confirming that it is/was his hand, and recalling the Stalker's words about there being "no straight lines" in the Zone. One can also see the shot as the sleeping Stalker's dream image, which would make this one of the most literal visualization ever of 'stream' of consciousness.²³ But this would not necessarily negate the temporal and spatial quirk since, as the Stalker himself said of the Zone, "it is capricious but at each moment it is just as we've made it by our own state of mind."

With its camera position perpendicular to the ground, the long take achieves a physical estrangement of space and object and a temporal estrangement by returning to the same point in space and perhaps time (which also happens in a larger structural sense with the 'stone in the well' shots discussed later). As a viewer, we are seduced by the sensuous beauty of the image and the odd collage of objects, but the long take offers no predictable sense of teleology. We may be surprised when the camera returns us to where we began, but we can not have prefigured this or envisioned when/where the movement would end. Hence one's perception of time is not conditioned by a knowing or anticipatory sense of expectation. *Stalker* contains other examples of spatial and geographical ambiguity which causes 'unpredictable' teleology. For example, shot 93 (54"), which tracks along a moss-covered terrain past a precipice overlooking a dark body of water. For the nine seconds where the camera is "suspended" over dark waters we are devoid of any spatial, and consequently

²² Petrie and Johnson, 145.

²³ Critic Shiv K. Kumar discusses Henri Bergson's Duration as being at the source of the modernist infatuation with the inner mind, in both a formal and thematic sense ("Bergson's Theory of the Novel." *Modern Fiction Studies* 6/4 (1960-61): 325-336). This is undoubtedly true, but Bergson was not the only philosopher/thinker whose concepts were appropriated by the art world. For example, it was William James who actually coined 'stream of consciousness' in 1890. But Bergson, according to Kumar, had the aesthetic sensibility to inspire and point the way with his own poetic sensibility and suggestive writing style.

temporal, indexes (movement, perspective, depth, change, etc.). Without them we are unable to perceptually gauge movement, change, or teleology.²⁴ After several seconds of darkness, the camera tilts up to reveal a lakeside vista. This ‘revelation’ at the end relates to another important thematic, formal, and philosophical integration of time and the long take in *Stalker*: ‘creation time’.

Creation Time

“Time is invention, or it is nothing at all.”²⁵

A novel interpretive strategy for the use of the long take in *Stalker* is that in certain key long takes, time functions to let things happen in front of the spectator’s eyes, to “surprise us” in the same way that the three characters are surprised by the physical surrounding of the Zone, and their inner self (what they discover about themselves). This sense of mystery and magic is transmitted *in time*, through the long take: as for example, the scene in the hills by the abandoned car (shot 51); the “waterfall” scene in the tile room area (shot 71); the scene of the three men sitting outside the wish fulfilling room (shot 130); the moment where the Stalker’s invalid daughter appears to be walking (shot 139); and the final table top scene (shot 143). In these long takes, time is given the power of “creation,” in the sense that something

²⁴ A literal sense of ‘blocked’ teleology occurs in the Meatgrinder scene (14). The Stalker is about to guide the two travelers through a large drainpipe which has gained the nickname the ‘meatgrinder’ for its treacherousness. The Stalker has built up the drainpipe as the most dangerous passageway in the Zone, which raises the tension at the outset of their passage. The tension is further augmented by the way the scene withholds our view of the tunnel’s end. First by the curve in the tunnel (shot 97, 2’10”), then by reverse angles that face away from the end (shot 98, 45”, shot 102, 1’09”), and angles that face the end but whose depth is obscured by the foreshortening properties of the telephoto lenses (shot 101, 1’03”).

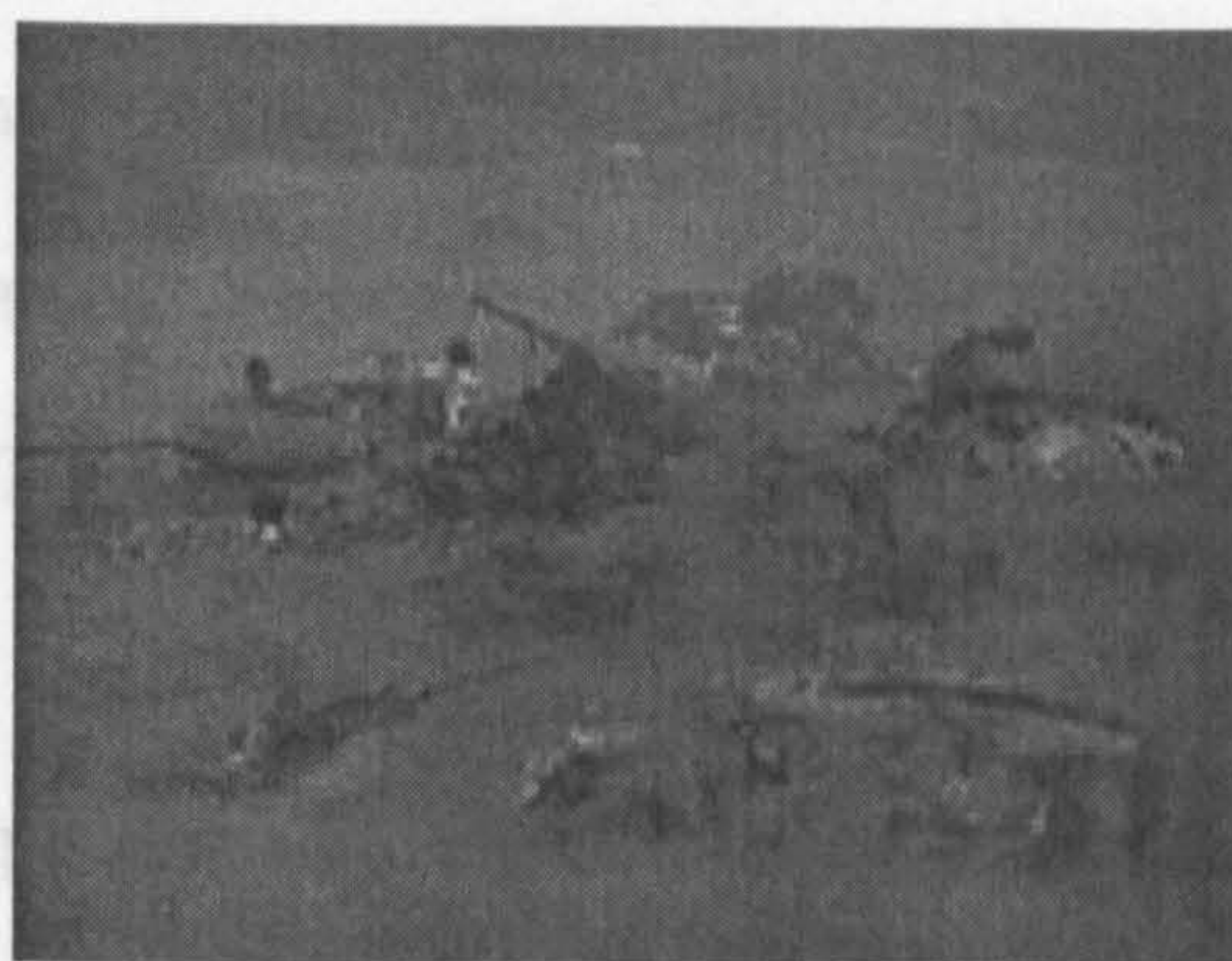
²⁵ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell. 1911. (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1964), 361.

magical, unbelievable, or unexplainable (and often simple) occurs within the “reality” (real time) of the continuous long take.²⁶ There are no attempts to fool, surprise or astonish through an edit, but through the integrity of the sustained shot.

The first of such long takes, shot 51, (2’31”) is especially important because it embodies the physical passage through a threshold into the precarious spatial-temporal nature of the Zone. The shot begins with a medium long shot of an abandoned car, its rusted frame nestled within deep foliage. The camera begins to track toward the car’s open, hollow frame. The Stalker becomes visible in mid-ground through the car frame, followed by the Scientist. The camera reaches the car’s frame and continues forward into its empty hull, then stops, leaving only the outer edge of the car’s frame visible. The camera zooms in so we no longer see any of the car and frames the three travellers standing together, surrounded by blowing buckwheat in the foreground and derelict vehicles visible in the extreme background. Slowly and minimally, the camera movement has taken us beyond the car into a wholly new space.

Once past the car we are able to see that the surrounding grass is at waist level. The Stalker throws a piece of weighted cloth that he uses as a guide ahead of them and tells the Scientist to walk onward. Only now, with the Scientist’s forward movement down a steep grassy side, do we fully grasp the geography of the land. The drop is so steep that when the other two men follow, they fall completely below the frameline. From the shot’s point of origin it was impossible to gauge this dip in the terrain. With the frame now empty, the camera zooms in to reveal deep in the gully stranded, derelict army vehicles and armaments (tanks, jeeps, canons, a bazooka). The

²⁶ This philosophical interpretation of time is indebted to Henri Bergson’s “elan vital.” In his book *Creative Evolution* Bergson defines the elan vital as the creative force that moves and shapes matter into evolving life forms. Elan vital becomes duration, real time, understood as a universal and guiding principal of the evolutionary process.



'Creation Time' Opening and Closing Moments of Long Take Shot 51

passage of time has accorded these war-time vehicles a strange feeling of appropriateness within the greenery. Like the many unusual, oddly matched objects we see submerged under water, the army artifacts instill a sense of timelessness to the Zone. They belong to a military past with no apparent function within the Zone's environment. Yet their uselessness and state of decrepitude represents a hopeful symbol of the death of modern warfare.

This is an important long take for several reasons. It is the first shot to introduce the notion of "creation time" through the long take, where the time of the shot leads to a physical, geographical, or emotional discovery. As such this "revelation-in-time" establishes the mercurial, shifting spatial-temporal nature of the Zone, which forms a major part of the film's dramatic tension and narrative drive. We discover the peculiarities of the landscape *through the time of the shot*. The camera moves straight ahead forward in physical space, as if passing through a threshold (into the past? into the future? into a sphere of timelessness?), yet still produces 'twists and turns' because, as the Stalker says, "In the Zone the direct way is not the shortest."

The Writer and Scientist soon learn that in the Zone you can not trust the normally reliable empirical means of assessing the phenomenal world. When the three men pass through this threshold, the Stalker looks straight ahead and tells his two

voyagers, “The room is over there.” But then proceeds to throw the weighted cloth in a different direction! The experience of time is likewise non-linear and prey to the whims of the Zone’s supra-natural environment, expressive of a sentiment from Tarkovsky’s diaries: “I am convinced that Time is reversible. At any rate it does not go in a straight line.”²⁷

Tarkovsky employs the Zone’s temporal-spatial unpredictability and creation time in a mesmerizing long take during the (ironically) entitled “Dry Tunnel” scene.²⁸ The scene (shots 66 through 72) begins with the Writer and the Scientist resting in front of a tiled wall. The sound of unseen water drops is faintly heard. The scene cuts on the sound of splashing water to an overhead shot of a well, into which a stone has fallen. At this point this shot remains a mystery, but it will gain retroactive meaning in the form of an unusual temporal loop when we see the Writer drop a stone into the well about forty minutes later in shot 115 (the implications for this will be discussed later). The camera pans with the Stalker as he moves into what appears to be a large drain or metal pipe, where he meets the other two men emerging from the tunnel. The Scientist wants to return to the tiled area for his knapsack, but the Stalker urges him not to in light of the Zone’s shifting geography (where “no path leads to the same place twice”). The Writer descends a set of stairs and the scene cuts to an incongruous sea of white, frothy water. The long take in question, shot 71, begins with the Writer in close-up. As he walks out of frame right, the camera rack focuses to the background to reveal the same tiled wall/space seen earlier in shot 66. The implication is that the Writer seems to be back where he started, as if caught in a temporal-spatial loop. The camera begins to slowly track right, past the tiled wall, and past a series of

²⁷ Andrei Tarkovsky, *Time Within Time: The Diaries*, trans. from the Russian by Kitty Hunter-Blair (Calcutta: Seagull Books, 1991), 122.

²⁸ The full effect of this creation time long take is difficult to express in words because of the importance of sound to the surprise effect.

hanging lamp fixtures. The sound of running water has swelled, but is oddly contrasted by the 'dry' creaking sound of the swinging lamps. The movement continues screen right and reveals the source of the loud water: a huge waterfall visible through periodic arched openings in the stone wall. The camera continues to track laterally to a close-up of the perplexed-looking Writer, who, like us, is wondering: where did this waterfall come from? how did we get back to the tiled room? and how/why has the area changed so drastically? The camera reframes slightly to frame the Writer standing back to back with the Stalker in medium close-up. The following conversation takes place:

Stalker: "Here's the dry tunnel."

Writer: "A real dry tunnel!"

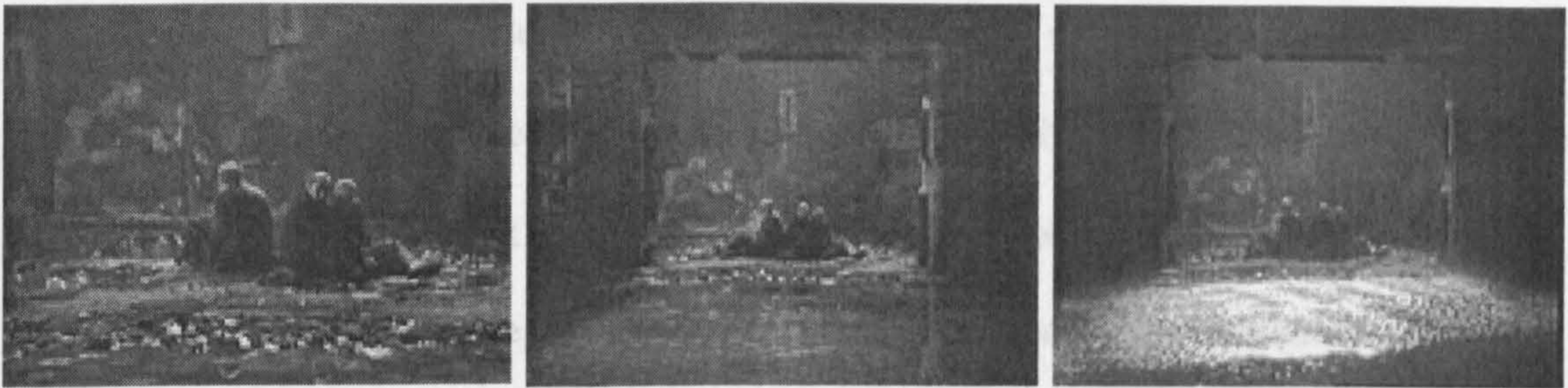
Stalker: "It's a local joke, we usually swim across."

They soon realize that the Scientist is not with them, but the Stalker tells the Writer they can not wait for him because "things change here every minute." And sure enough, two shots later they find themselves back at the tiled room as it was at the beginning of the scene, with the Scientist sitting quietly next to his knapsack having a sandwich and drink.²⁹

This temporal/spatial circularity is not unlike the straight forward camera movement over the objects in the stream that defies spatial logic by returning to the point of origin. Like shot 51, this long take renders a sense of discovery and wonder associated with what I am calling "creation time." The miraculous appearance of the

²⁹The Professor tells them that he "crawled" back to get his knapsack. Which may be a reference to the earlier moment when the Writer tells the Professor "Forget your crawling empiricism. Miracles lay beyond empiricism." As per other moments, Tarkovsky subtly lays open the possibility of a natural-empirical understanding of a seemingly 'magical' or 'supernatural' event (as we will later see with the final scene).

waterfall and the changed landscape occurs within the time span of the long take (2'42"), which takes us through an unexpected physical and geographical change, from barely audible dripping water to a deafening, surging waterfall, from a relatively dry tiled room area to the same space transformed into a tropical-like fauna. It is through the continuous time of the long take that we share the sense of wonder and surprise with the characters.



'Creation Time' in Long Take Shot 130

Another such moment occurs in shot 130 (4'48"), which represents a crucial juncture in the film: when the three men finally arrive at the wish fulfilling room, but are unable to make the moral commitment to enter. After arguing and struggling amongst themselves, the three exhausted men sit on the wet ground outside the room's threshold. The camera, positioned inside the room, slowly dollies back to a long shot of the three seated men. Several inches of water is visible on the tiled floor, as well as a water reflection of the three men. A shaft of bright light comes down directly from above, casting a reflecting shine on the water, then darkens to a brownish hue. The sound of dripping water gives way to a spontaneous rain shower, which produces a rippling rainbow effect on the water. Like in shot 71, water is connected to sudden and surprising events. It is accorded a mysterious, yet life

³⁰ Tarkovsky was always reluctant to give symbolic readings to his imagery. He said, in a conference in Italy he conducted a somewhat and expressed his attitude to water: "Water is a mysterious element, a single molecule of which is very photogenic. It can convey or reflect and it flows in change and flux. ... Maybe it has subconscious echoes - perhaps my love of water when I was a boy - the memory of some ancestral transmigration." Peter Maclellan, "Tarkovsky in Italy," *Light and Sound* 53/1 (1982/3): 54-56.

affirming presence.³⁰ The rain tapers off as quietly and unexpectedly as it started. The three men observe the moment in quiet contemplation. The lighting in the room changes once more. The faint sound of an oncoming train is heard, as it was in the Stalker's home at the beginning of the film. Perhaps in less dramatic fashion, but this is another long take where something spontaneous and unpredictable occurs in the extended time of a long take. And, as in most of these 'creation time' long takes, the spontaneous event is connected to nature.

The qualities discussed above coalesce in shot number 115 (4'35"), perhaps the richest and most complex long take in the film. The shot begins with the Writer in extreme long shot lying asleep on the ground amid sand dunes (see photos on page 252). We can see a large well jutting out of the ground behind him. He wakes up, picks up a stone and drops it into the well. Several seconds later we hear the thud of the stone hitting bottom. He sits on the edge of the well and then several seconds later we hear a second sound, this time a splash. The two sounds clearly present a non-rational series of events. The Writer's reaction suggests that something unnatural has happened. He stares into the well and says, "Another experiment. Experiments, facts, truth at the last boundary. There is no such thing as facts, especially here." The 'fact's that the Writer claims do not exist are those licensed by the cause and effect law of rational, linear time. Temporal cause and effect is shattered by the well event in two senses:

- a) the two different sounds of the stone hitting the bottom of the well, and
- b) the retroactive meaning this shot forms with the earlier shot 67

³⁰ Tarkovsky was always reluctant to give symbolic readings to his imagery. However, at a conference in Italy he concedes somewhat and expresses his attraction to water: "Water is a mysterious element, a single molecule of which is very photogenic. It can convey movement and a sense of change and flux.... Maybe it has subconscious echoes -perhaps my love of water arises from some atavistic memory or some ancestral transmigration." Tony Mitchell, "Tarkovsky in Italy," *Sight and Sound* 52/1 (1982/83): 54-56.

Temporal order is broken by a stone that is heard dropping twice, first into an empty well, and then into a water filled well. If we recall the earlier discussion, in shot 67 there is an unexplained appearance of the overhead shot of a stone splashing into a well. At that point in the film the shot was mysterious and ambiguous. The shot is now placed in a retroactive context. Only the cause comes some 40 minutes after the effect. In both cases the rational cause and effect associated with linear time is broken.

This shot's complexity is centered in the way it encapsulates the film's formal and thematic integration of time. The incrementally slow inward dolly movement from the initial long shot to the camera's final medium close-up position expresses durational complexity through minimalism. While the unpredictable nature of time, underscored through key dialogue, echoes the central thematic and philosophical concern of the film. The dialogue in question needs to be placed in context. In our introduction to the Writer back in scene 4, he is seen talking to a lady about the existence of the Bermuda Triangle. He tells her, "Don't count on it. There's no telepathy, no ghosts, no flying saucers. They can't exist. The world is governed by cast-iron laws..." About 45 minutes later in shot 68, the Writer, agreeing with the Stalker, advises the Scientist against returning for his knapsack because of the Zone's treacherous, unpredictable geography. He counters the Scientist's objective certainty: "Forget your crawling empiricism. Miracles lay beyond empiricism." And then about 40 minutes later, in this shot, we hear the Writer's patently non-rationalist refrain in reference to the sound of the stone falling twice: "...There is no such thing as facts, especially here." Based on these three dialogue exchanges, the Writer has gradually changed his belief system. To the point, at least, where he now entertains the existence of events unexplainable by natural law. Once a cynic and non-believer, the

Writer now courts a philosophical position held dearly by the Stalker: the necessity to believe in values beyond the strictly rational, scientific, and material.

The unpredictability of time and the affective nature of creation time is also hinted at in another line of dialogue spoken by the Writer during this key long take: “*Once*, the future was *only* a continuation of the present. Its change loomed beyond the horizon. But now the future’s a part of the present.” The first part of the passage suggests that the Writer is making reference to a view he held prior to his experience in the Zone (“*Once*, the future”). The second part, “*But now*,” suggests a changed position, one conditioned by his experience within the Zone’s unpredictable temporal/spatial properties. It appears that the Writer’s encounter with the Zone has led to a change in his view of reality, and that now he sees time as something that can not be predetermined or forecast in a linear, cause and effect manner. Admittedly, the line of dialogue is open to interpretation. But within the context I have outlined, the first part resounds with mechanistic determinism – “Once, the future was *only* a continuation of the present.” Whereas the latter part, “But now the future’s a part of the present,” suggests a creative interchange between the past, present, and the future. The second passage suggests a flux-like co-existence of past, present, future, where immobile ‘states’ do not exist (time as Bergson’s Duration).³¹ Within the context of the long take’s deployment of creative time, the line of dialogue becomes a statement of free will, of creativity versus determinism, and a statement against a teleologically divined future.

³¹This line of dialogue bears a philosophical parallel to Henri Bergson's views on time: “...our duration is not merely one instant replacing another; if it were, there would never be anything but the present – no prolonging of the past into the actual, no evolution, no concrete duration. Duration is the continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and swells as it advances.” (*Creative Evolution*, Trans. Arthur Mitchell. 1911. (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1964), p. 4-5.

The understanding of non-linear, unpredictable time in this long take is underscored by the moment where the rock drops into the well, which, as noted, forms a temporal loop to a much earlier shot. The relational meaning of this earlier shot is only explained now, when we see the cause of the splash (the Writer dropping the stone into the well). This unusual edit echoes the many moments in the film where rational temporal and spatial cause and effect is sabotaged. For example, the way the three travellers leave but return to the 'tiled room'; and, most strikingly, the series of temporally continuous but spatially discontinuous shots while the three travellers rest near the tiled room (Scene 12). The over-all effect is, again, one of durational complexity, a sense of not being able to accurately gauge temporal span, or of using internal time to properly estimate external time. These moments of temporal 'sabotage' demonstrate that the Zone's temporal and spatial capriciousness is a refutation of causal effect associated with rational, linear time.

In summary, this long take is exemplary of how time and the long take fuse form, theme and philosophy in *Stalker*. The durational complexity of the shot, achieved by the minimalist advancement of change from long shot to medium close-up, helps to formally underscore the (potentially) creative nature of time. Unpredictable, non-linear time is represented by the double sound of the stone falling, by the temporal loop the shot forms with shot 67, and by a key line of dialogue. While a second line of dialogue express^{es} a change in the Writer's belief system (which opens up the hope for change in the world beyond the Zone). Hence in this long take of 4'35" the narrative advances while thematic and philosophical meaning is imparted through the particular temporal tonality of the shot.

Creation Time Beyond the ‘Zone’

Two long takes at the end of the film, both featuring the Stalker’s daughter Monkey, represent the final stage in the film’s philosophical and thematic progression. Close textual and statistical analysis reveals that up until scene 18, “Looking Into the Room,” the only long takes to exhibit the notion of ‘creation time’ have been within the Zone. The scenes leading up to the entrance into the Zone, scenes 1 to 6, were marked by what I called ‘drab time.’ That is, none of the long takes outside the Zone exhibited the spontaneity, surprise, or sense of discovery associated with creation time. Additionally, none of the non-Zone long takes were marked by the sort of unpredictable teleology defined earlier. But once the three men return from the Zone to the city, things seem to change.

The first of the two long takes that introduce the shift to a ‘Zone-affected’ city is shot 139, the final shot of the first scene back in the city. The three men are back at the dingy bar from the opening scene. The Stalker’s wife and daughter have come to meet the Stalker to accompany him home. The shot begins in a profile close-up of Monkey, as she appears to be walking screen right. This surprises the viewer, since in the Zone we learn that the Stalker’s daughter, perhaps contaminated genetically because of her father’s contact with the Zone, was born without legs. So how can she be walking? As the camera tracks right with her we see trees and polluted water in the background. Monkey begins to veer off to her left, away from the camera’s straight lateral line of movement. The camera stops tracking, and as she walks further away from the camera we see that she is not walking, but is hoisted onto her father’s shoulders. Our expectation is thwarted and we are witness to a “revelation” of a slightly different order (something apparently magical is explained by natural law).

However, for the first time outside the Zone we have a long take that contains an element of surprise or wonderment that was absent from the city prior to the trip to the Zone.

'Creation Time' Beyond The Zone in Shot 139



This long take has introduced the possibility of surprise and unpredictability in the real world outside the Zone. The previously depicted pre-Zone 'drab time' has now attained a magical quality of surprise that it did not previously possess. The thematic implication is that magic and wonderment is not only in the guarded Zone but all around. And that the possibility for selfless love and spiritual rejuvenation is in every person. This point is driven further in the powerful final long take, where once again, the possibility for 'magic' is brought to bear.

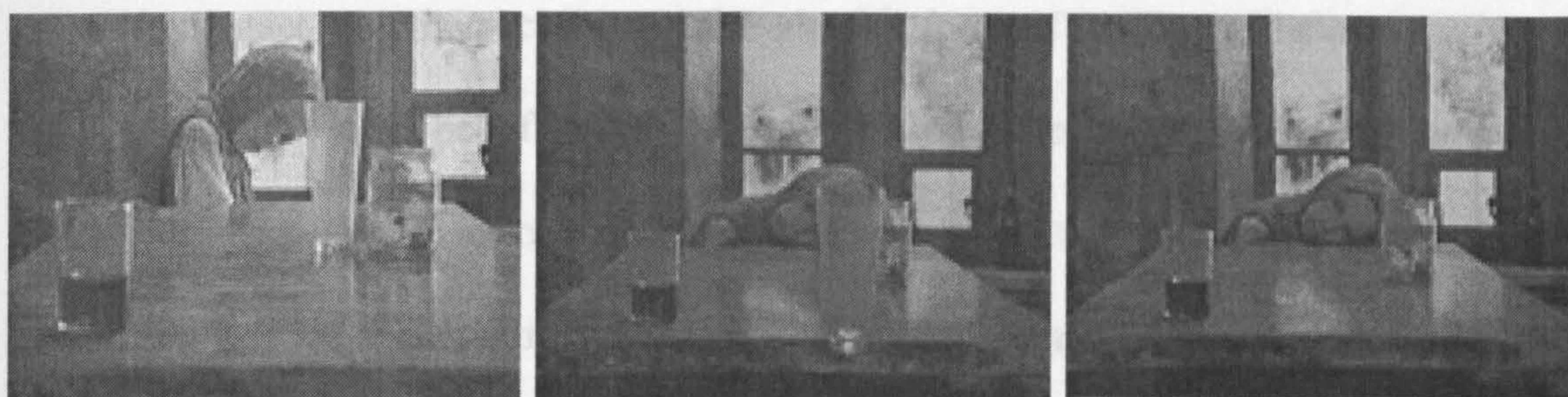
The concluding long take (4'20"), full of mystery and ambiguity, offers the interpretative possibility that things have changed in the real world beyond the Zone. To begin, this is the first full color shot in the city.³² The shot begins in a right profile close-up of Monkey (like shot 139), seated at the kitchen table intently reading a book

³² Tarkovsky also employs the shift from black and white to color as a signifier of hope and creation at the end of *Andrei Rublev*. In this epic film about the Russian icon painter, Andrei Rublev loses his will to paint and makes a vow of silence after witnessing horrid events of inhumanity. After witnessing the most extraordinary act of a young boy orchestrating the successful casting of a huge church bell, Rublev regains his will to paint. The film then cuts to a concluding montage of color reproductions of Rublev's paintings.

of poems. We hear the off-screen sound of a distant train. The camera dollies back slowly, and reveals three glasses lined up diagonally on the table: a short glass half-filled with a dark liquid; a thick jar filled with broken eggshells and other objects; and a tall milk-smeared glass. Monkey puts the book down on the table and looks off-screen. We then hear a female voice-over reading a love poem (by 19th century Russian poet Fyodor Tyuchev). By the time the voice-over stops, the camera has dollied back a considerable distance across the table. Monkey bends her head down angled toward the table top, and stares at the glass closest to her. The glass begins to move on its own volition. The black dog that the Stalker brought back from the Zone whimpers off-screen, as if sensing an alien or unusual force. The glass moves ahead past the tall milk-smeared glass to the left edge of the table. Her eyes are riveted on the glass. It stops a few inches short of the edge of the table. She then shifts her eyes to the second glass, the jar, and it moves ahead a few inches; then the third tall milk glass moves forward. At 159'08", nearly three minutes into the shot, she places her face directly on the table; a moment later the milk glass falls below frame line to the floor, crashes, rolls, but does not shatter. Seconds later the window, table, and the glasses begin to vibrate, like in the opening scene, as the rhythmic clanking sound of an oncoming train swells. The sound of the train gets louder, shaking the table top. Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy' begins to play, and builds to a cacophony with the sounds of a human choir and the oncoming train. The camera dollies forward slightly toward Monkey. The shot slowly fades as the train sound and vibrations diminish and the music fades out.

Was this act a miracle? Did the Stalker bring back 'powers' from the Zone that he transmitted to his mutant daughter and which caused her to move the glasses telekinetically? The film ends on this exclamative long take which brings back the

sense of mystery and the unknown quantity that previously resided only in the Zone. But it is important that Tarkovsky does not provide a simple, definitive explanation but leaves open the possibility of a natural explanation: that the movement of the



Miracle or Explainable?

glasses across the table could have been caused by the vibrations of the oncoming train. Retaining this hesitation between a natural and supra-natural explanation serves the very point of the film: that one must resort to faith to believe in a supra-natural explanation when empirical and rational laws are insufficient or inconclusive.

As noted earlier, the Writer's belief system is seen to change across three long takes spaced out across the film: shot 11 (12'41"-13'07"), shot 68 (66'36"-69'36"), and shot 115 (104'52"-109'27"). Early in the film (Scene 4, shot 11), the Writer reveals to a young lady friend his belief in a world "governed by cast-iron laws." The seemingly offhand dialogue is important in relation to the mystery and creation that permeates certain key long takes in *Stalker*, and that resonate with the film's central meaning: the necessity for values that go beyond the material, the concrete, the scientific, and the rational; values such as love, art, faith, hope, nature, and self-sacrifice. It also opens up the possibility that life in this post-apocalyptic/post-faith city can also change. Monkey's seemingly miraculous act in the film's final long take leaves open the possibility that creation time (a non-linear, non-teleological, subjective understanding of time) and change, has 'seeped' into a world previously governed by "cast-iron laws." The sense of surprise, ambiguity, and 'going beyond

the empirical' that was exclusively present in the Zone (scene 8-18), is now seemingly present outside the Zone. The first line of dialogue from the Writer that signals his skepticism toward the unexplainable takes place outside the Zone, before the Writer comes in contact with the peculiar and life-altering force of the Zone. The next two that signal a shift in his belief system occur within the Zone. The mutant daughter's 'miraculous' act takes place outside the Zone. Being mute, she is unable to express herself through the Writer's medium: words. Her mental/physical *act* completes the evolution of the Writer's belief system change by extending creation time outside the Zone.

The Long Take and Scene Construction

Jean Mitry discusses how, as a general rule, films that "extend" time appear to be slower paced than films where the action covered is longer than the screen-time. As an extreme example, with all things being equal, a two hour film that covers ten years of a person's life will appear faster paced than a two hour film that covers ten minutes of the same person's life. "The relationships of time between the represented [narrative time] and its representation [screen-time] are significant in this respect."³³

This can be seen as part of a double articulation of slow movement in *Stalker*: the noted slow paced camera movements and the minimally progressing narrative.³⁴ For example, the first three scenes of *Stalker* cover 12'41" of screen-time through a

³³ Jean Mitry. *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, trans. Christopher King. (Bloomington and Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1997), 167.

³⁴ This is not the same as the 'double articulation' noted by Ian Christie about Tarkovsky: "the time already inscribed in individual shots and ...the necessary...*manipulation* of this time by the director as he compiles these diverse time-fragments into a new temporal construct which is the film the spectator will experience." *Tarkovsky: Cinema as Poetry*. Maya Turovskaya. trans. Natasha Ward, ed. and introduction by Ian Christie. (London: Faber and Faber, 1989), xxi.

roughly automorphic representation of time. In the course of this time all that happens plot wise is the Stalker wakes up, argues with his wife, and leaves to meet the two men he is to guide into the Zone. The first 12'41" of screen-time equates roughly with 12'41" in the Stalker's life (automorphic time). If we compare this to *Ugetsu* and *The Magnificent Ambersons* we come up with an appreciable difference. In *Ugetsu*, by 12'21" of screen-time (scene 6) we have had six different location changes, and advanced considerably more in homomorphic time. While by the same time in *The Magnificent Ambersons* we have already established a pre-history of the Amberson family's 19th century setting, and ventured half-way into the present day ball scene.

But a more important consideration for the affective nature of time, or the temporal tonality in *Stalker*, is the legibility of the overall span of time covered by the diegesis. All films contain, to varying degree, necessary temporal gaps between shots and scenes (ellipsis) that form the narration. In most cases, whether minor or major, the ellipsis is legible, meaning that the viewer can surmise the amount of time that has

transpired between the shot or scene. For example, scene 4 of *The Magnificent Ambersons* ends with the remaining party guests, Lucy and Eugene, taking their leave of the Ambersons estate by exchanging goodnights at the front door with George, Jack, Fanny, and Isabel. The next shot is of Lucy and Eugene about to board their horse-less carriage just outside the Amberson mansion. The cut contains a minor, legible ellipsis: the time it took for Eugene and Lucy to walk from the door to the street.

Recalling again Mitry's generalisation, with two films of equal length and pacing, the film with a greater narrative time span will feel faster paced than the one with a shorter narrative time span. However, Mitry does not consider a distinct third possibility: films for which there are no defining indices as to how much time has

passed (beyond such general ones as clothing, facial hair, visible aging, etc.)³⁵ This becomes an important factor in *Stalker*. What becomes noticeable in *Stalker* is that there is a thematically designed evolution across the film from legible time gaps to ambiguous and non-commensurable temporal gaps. In the scenes leading up to the journey into the Zone (scenes 1 to 6) the time within most every shot and every scene is automorphic and continuous, and the ellipsis' in-between shots and scenes is estimable. In fact, in all but two cases the time between scenes is continuous. And in the two scenes where there is an ellipsis, the gap is easily estimable. For example, in the cut from scene 3 to scene 4 the time that it took for the Stalker to travel from his apartment to the bar represents the temporal gap (a homomorphic representation of time). But, in keeping with my overall reading of a shift from 'drab-time' to 'creation time,' the nature of time and our ability to gauge time span changes dramatically with scene 7, The Trolley Journey.

Scene 7 is the first scene in the film to represent homomorphic and discontinuous time. But more important is the nature of the homomorphic time that is being represented (where has the 'missing' time gone?). To repeat the findings from Chapter 3, as spectators we are unable to estimate with any precision how much the 3'42" of screen-time represents in actual narrative time. Since we do not know how far the Zone is from the city limits, coupled with the slow speed of the vehicle being used, it is impossible to guess how long the three men have been in transit (and hence how much time has been compressed). Of equal importance is that the temporal tonality achieved by the noted formal and textual elements renders the scene a durational complexity whereby the 3'42" feels considerably 'long'. The combination

³⁵ In popular cinema the narrative time span covered from beginning to end will always be understood by the spectator, except in cases where it has no bearing on the major plot. This does not mean that there are no temporal gaps in-between scenes which may be unspecified. There clearly can be, but they are not gaps that (intentionally) cause narrative confusion.

of the particular temporal tonality within each shot and the unbridgeable temporal interval in-between the five shots renders the trolley sequence its sense of temporal vagueness. As I noted in Chapter 3, this temporal vagueness symbolizes the spiritual journey that the three travellers are about to embark upon, as well as foreshadowing the 'unreal' time-space properties of the Zone.

Once in the Zone, the temporal tonality undergoes a change. The amount of actual physical time that the three travellers spend in the Zone is non-commensurable. In fact the journey to the Zone and all the scenes in the Zone can be seen, structurally speaking, as forming a large block of durational complexity.³⁶ Meaning that we lose our ability to estimate the relationship between screen-time and narrative time, and consequently the time spent in the Zone feels either much longer or much shorter than the external time. One long take soon after their arrival in the Zone depicts a subtle geographical setting that explains one aspect of how this durational complexity is achieved. In scene 9 the Stalker looks off-frame and says, "The room is over there," and then proceeds to throw the weighted cloth he uses to guide them safely in a completely different direction. In the long take in question (1'35", shot 58), the Writer does not heed the Stalker's words of warning about the Zone's precarious landscape and decides to walk in a straight line toward the wish fulfilling room. We see the building that houses the room in the extreme background and ^{the} three men in ^{the} same frame. The depth of field allows us to see the relative close proximity of the men to the room, and realize that it would take but a few minutes for the men to traverse the space. Yet a mysterious incident discourages the Writer from continuing along the path, and the film goes on to consume well over an hour of screen-time, from 58'50",

³⁶ One could argue that, in the Deleuzian sense, *Stalker* is non-commensurable as a whole, from the beginning to end. For example, just how much time has transpired from the first scene at the bar to the scene in the bar at the end is indecipherable. One writer even went as far as saying that the three men never left the bar, and that the Zone was all a subjective projection!

to 121'24," before they arrive at the room. This adds enormously to the overall sense of durational complexity in the Zone scenes, and of the difficulty in using conventional time and space indicators to gauge how long they have been in the Zone.



Shot 58: The 'Room,' spatially near, temporally far

As a point of comparison, this temporal ambiguity across the Zone scenes is similar to that felt by viewers (and Genjuro) across the Kutsuki mansion scenes in *Ugetsu*, where it is difficult to gauge how long Genjuro has been with the ghost Princess Wakasa, or how long he has been away from his village.³⁷ In both cases the temporal ambiguity serves a thematic point: to express the magical spatial-temporal properties of the Zone; and to reflect the supernatural time of the Kutsuki mansion. To court another similarity, in both *Stalker* and *Ugetsu* the passage from one form of time to another (drab time to creation time in *Stalker*, natural to supernatural time in *Ugetsu*) is mediated by a 'journey' (the flatcar scene in *Stalker* and the boat scene in *Ugetsu*).

The change in temporal tonality and the overall sense of durational complexity that occurs in the Zone scenes is corroborated by my contextual statistical analysis (CSA). To begin with, 6 of the 12 Zone scenes represent homomorphic and

³⁷ The clearest indicator that Genjuro has not been away for many years, is that his son Genichi is still a very young boy when he returns. But since we only learn this near the end, this can not alter the *initial* viewing experience of the Kutsuki scenes. The realization of Genichi's age can only ground the temporality of the Kutsuki scenes retroactively.

discontinuous time and 4 contain a temporal ellipsis, while none of the opening 6 city scenes represent homomorphic and discontinuous time. As noted earlier, there are no long takes in the scenes before the Zone that represent creation time. Creation time is introduced in the Zone and only extended outside the Zone in the later city scenes as a thematic manifestation of philosophical change to a less cynical, materialist, rationalist, and deterministic world view. The ‘Zone-factor’ also effects the ASL. The ASL for scenes 1 through 6 is 58”. It increases in the Zone by 11” to 1’09” and then dramatically to 1’25.50” for the final 4 city scenes.

A progressively increasing ASL is something *Stalker* shares structurally with *The Magnificent Ambersons* and *Ugetsu*. In all three films the ASL shows a considerable increase from the first half to the second half of the film:

	<u>1st Half ASL</u>	<u>2nd Half ASL</u>
<i>The Magnificent Ambersons</i>	13”	30”
<i>Ugetsu</i>	24.6”	37”
<i>Stalker</i>	58.5”	1’21”

In chapter 8, I wondered whether this increasing ASL across the two case study films was a reflection of a common characteristic of filmic narrative, or something particular to films with a dominant long take practice. We have now seen this trend continue in our third case study film. If I include the 18 other films which comprise my extra sampling, then we have 13 films with a slower ASL in the second half, and 7 that demonstrate an increased ASL in the second half.³⁸ Although the relatively low sample pool (21 films) makes this far from conclusive, there is at least evidence to warrant further research into the relationship between a progressively increasing ASL

³⁸ They are the 18 films statistically analysed in Appendix 2, plus *Panic in the Streets*, *Chinese Roulette*, and *Stranger Than Paradise*. In one film the ASL remains identical across the first and second half (*Christmas in August*).

and films with a long take dominance (for example, 4 of the 5 radical long take films have slower ASL's in the second half). In the least, my findings cast some doubt on Barry Salt's self-assured observations in this area:

In the case of a 16mm. print of *Le Million*...the first 1000 feet gives an ASL of 5.19 feet, the next 1000 feet an ASL of 5.47 feet, and the remaining 896 feet an ASL of 5.26 feet, all of which stands against an ASL for the whole film of 5.31 feet. Here the deviation of the Average Shot Length from the parts, each about 27 minutes long, to the whole is only a few percent, *and this is quite typical in my experience* [my emphasis].³⁹

I have no way of knowing which films "*typical in my experience*" entails. However, if the majority of films on which Salt bases his claim for ASL consistency across a film were comparable to *Le Million* in cutting rate (8.6" ASL), then this observation could, in fact, help support the claim that an ASL rate that increases across the film is a structural component particular to films with a long take dominance; or at least, more likely to occur in films with a long take dominance than in films with quick cutting rates.⁴⁰

The radical long take practice of *Stalker* gives statistical evidence to an increased dependence on the long take in every possible sense. The percentage screen-time of scenes that are dominated by the long take increases from 61% (*Ambersons*), to 70% (*Ugetsu*), to 100% (*Stalker*). The aggregate long take screen-

³⁹Barry Salt, *Film Style & Technology: History & Analysis*, 2nd expanded ed. (Oxford: Starwood, 1992), 226. For some reason Salt has calculated the ASL in feet per shot in this instance, whereas he uses seconds everywhere else in the book. The figure of 5.31 feet per shot translates to 8.6" per shot, but in any case the point remains the same.

⁴⁰To arrive at conclusive remarks concerning this connection between progressive ASL rate and long take dominance would, of course, require a much larger sampling of films, both of the long take and the quicker cutting rate variety. This would yield important consequences for an understanding of long take practice, but, alas, this time intensive endeavor will have to be set aside as a follow-up project.

time increases from 71% (*Ambersons*), to 74% (*Ugetsu*), to 94% (*Stalker*). The percentage of shots that are long takes increases from 18% (*Ambersons*), to 43% (*Ugetsu*), to 67% (*Stalker*). The percentage of scenes that either begin or end with a long take increases from 79% (*Ambersons*), to 90% (*Ugetsu*), to 100% (*Stalker*). The percentage of aggregate screen-time formed by the long takes increases from 71% (*Ambersons*), to 74% (*Ugetsu*), to 94% (*Stalker*). And the average of long takes per scene increases from 1.3 (*Ambersons*), to 2.8 (*Ugetsu*), to 4.3 (*Stalker*). The only area that showed a decrease is in the percentage of long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene. This rate moved from 66% (*Ambersons*), to 46% (*Ugetsu*), to 37% (*Stalker*). But this decrease is inversely appropriate, since the number of total long takes increases when moving from dialectical to radical Long Take practice. In addition, *Stalker* represents the first time that there were more long takes that opened a scene than long takes that closed a scene (20 to 17). The statistical scene breakdown below provides a context for some of the above findings, but I refer the reader to Appendix 2 for a complete overview.

<i>Scenes Structured Largely Through the Long Take (22)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
1.	3'11"	1	1	3'11"
2.	35"	1	1	35"
3.	1'07"	8	7	8'55"
4.	1'26"	6	5	8'37"
5.	34.2"	17	8	9'42"
6.	1'10"	3	3	3'31"
7.	44.4"	5	3	3'42"
8.	1'16"	9	9	11'23"
9.	1'06"	7	5	7'42"
10.	59.5"	8	4	7'56"
11.	1'08"	7	5	7'55"
12.	45"	13	7	9'46"
13.	54"	9	7	8'05"
14.	41.6"	20	9	13'52"
15.	2'44"	3	3	8'13"
16.	2'05"	4	2	8'19"

17.	2'05"	8	7	16'42"
18.	2'43"	2	2	5'26"
19.	37"	8	4	4'57"
20.	2'32.5"	2	2	5'05"
21.	2'56"	1	1	2'56"
22.	4'20"	1	1	4'20"

Total Time: 151'08" (94% of screen-time)

<u>Scenes Structured Largely Through Editing (0)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
<u>Scenes With a Mixed Structure (0)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length

Conclusion

As a starting point for my analysis of *Stalker*, I organized my case study around a thematically designed progression of the long take. Close textual analysis revealed a shift in temporal tonality from the ‘drab-time’ in the initial city scenes (1-6), to the dramatic appearance of homomorphic/discontinuous, non-teleological time during the Journey to the Zone (scene 7), to ‘creation time’ in the Zone scenes (8-18), to the transmigration of creation time into the city in the concluding scenes (19-22). The thematic implication is that the experience of the Zone has changed the once cynical Writer and materialist Professor/Scientist into potential believers of the paranormal and non-natural. I offer this progressive reading of time (from drab time to creation time) partly because, in *Stalker*, the pseudo-trappings of science-fiction are secondary to the journey of self-discovery. And time, a subject dear to Tarkovsky, becomes a medium through which this self-discovery occurs. As Tarkovsky writes, “Time is a condition for the existence of our ‘I’....Time is necessary to man, so that,

made flesh, he may be able to realise himself as a personality....⁴¹ Once in the Zone, the Writer and Scientist's preconceived notions of time and space are shattered, and replaced by a new sense of time and space brought on by the surprise and wonder of the Zone, a 'new reality' which profoundly alters their sense of self. Most importantly, the change of belief system introduces into the once drab city the non-materialist, non-rationalist qualities and values that are held dearly by the Stalker (and exemplified in its pure state by his wife): love, self-sacrifice, faith, and hope.⁴² The original reading of *Stalker* that I have provided could only have been possible through this philosophically-based formal and textual analysis of the long take and time (which includes the CSA).

This progression can be charted through the long takes, and their ability to represent unpredictable and mysterious events through non-linear, non-teleological time. I have referred to this as 'creation time.' A common formal property of creation time is durational complexity. In long takes that express durational complexity time loses its linearity, predictability, and legibility. Through non-commensurable intervals between long takes, long takes with minimalist change, and internalised and externalised subjectivity, screen-time attains the experiential qualities associated with subjective or psychological time, where time seems to move slowly, quickly, or indeterminably. In these cases it becomes difficult to accurately assess a shot's external time. In *Stalker*, long takes that express durational complexity and/or creation time become prevalent once in the Zone. There are two long takes in the pre-Zone scenes that contain durational complexity through minimalism (shots 1 & 14).

⁴¹ *Sculpting in Time: Reflections on the Cinema*. Translated by Kitty Hunter-Blair. (London: The Bodley Head, 1986), 57.

⁴² As Tarkovsky writes in *Sculpting in Time*, "Her [the Stalker's wife] love and her devotion are that final miracle which can be set against the unbelief, cynicism, moral vacuum poisoning the modern world, of which both the Writer and the Scientist are victims" (198).

However, a) durational complexity becomes more common in the Zone and, b) creation time does not appear in the pre-Zone city scenes. Creation time becomes a property of 'reality' (the natural world outside the Zone) only after the experience of the Zone.

As *Stalker*'s narrative progresses, time in the long take becomes an *expression of creation and invention*. Through the slow unfolding of time in certain key long takes, the audience experiences, sometimes along with the characters, the sense of something magical and unpredictable occurring. Writer Keith Ansell Pearson used the following words to express a key property of Henri Bergson's 'creative evolution': "In order to be inventive creative evolution must have the features of indetermination and unpredictability."⁴³ In a similar sense, long takes with a sense of mystery (non-teleological), an expression of non-linear time, and/or temporal estrangement contain the potential for creation time. From the larger thematic-philosophical standpoint, these creation time long takes offer a symbol of life affirming hope through a vital, spontaneous act. The surprising or magical events demonstrate that time can not be predetermined in a mechanistic, teleological fashion. This non-deterministic, unpredictable time is accorded a positive quality within the *Stalker*'s triadic narrative development: in the city before entering the Zone (scenes 1-6); the journey to the Zone and in the Zone (scenes 7-18); and back in the city (scenes 19-22). Although the long take is not a sufficient condition for 'creation time,' it is a necessary condition because the unpredictable and surprising events are extremely dependent on continuous duration. In *Stalker*, duration makes the slow build up of the event and the revelation of the surprise effective and affective. This is corroborated by a) the fact that creation time occurs exclusively in long takes, and b) by the extreme length of the

⁴³Keith Ansell Pearson, *Germinal Life: The Difference and repetition of Deleuze*. (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 51.

majority of the long takes which express creation time: shot 51 (2'31"), shot 71 (2'42"), shot 130 (4'48"), shot 143 (4'20").

Statistically, *Stalker*'s radical long take practice gives evidence to an expected across the board increase in long take dependency. For example, unlike the dialectical and synthetic long take practices, in a radical long take practice every scene is dominated by the long take. Although an extensive cross-sampling is beyond the limits of this thesis, in my conclusion I will offer evidence from a handful of other radical long take practice films to confirm these findings.

The statistical comparisons between the long take practices noted in the above "Long Take and Scene Construction" section demonstrates that my three case study films are sufficiently different from each other in their structural use of the long take. Yet a close textual analysis of time and the long take reveals structural generalities within the long take that cut across the differences. One example is the 'purposive aspect of perception' in a long take, which ties in to two other important temporal determinants of the long take: movement and teleology. As explained in Chapter 3, to maintain narrative interest (or pleasure) a long take must negotiate the proper balance between complete mystery and obvious awareness of what is happening on screen. For example, in scene 24 of *The Magnificent Ambersons* George tells the woman he loves, Lucy, that he is about to leave for Europe and may never return again. Welles stages this narrative exchange in a three minute lateral tracking shot following George and Lucy as they walk through the town's central street. George appears understandably shocked by Lucy's apparent calm indifference to the news that they may never see each other again. Since the audience knows that Lucy has feelings for George, we are also slightly surprised and puzzled at her behaviour. The suspense of

her behaviour is resolved two shots later when she enters a pharmacy after George has left her, presumably for something to calm her nerves, and faints off frame.⁴⁴

We saw that in *Ugetsu*'s Homecoming scene some of the temporal ambiguities in its final shot (183) are resolved when the following scene reassuringly returns us to natural time. In *Stalker*, the thematic and philosophical treatment of 'creation time' is precisely dependent on the 'purposive aspect of perception' and the absence of a strong teleology in the camera movements within certain long takes. Tarkovsky uses the absence of teleology to serve his thematic and philosophical purpose: time as invention and creation. The lack of a strong teleology is a necessary formal and textual ingredient to setting up the geographical, physical, or emotional revelations and surprises that occur through the temporal unfolding in selected long takes. The reason behind our perceptual attentiveness may be more mysterious, or withheld for longer in *Stalker* than in *Ugetsu* or *The Magnificent Ambersons*, but the 'purposive aspect of perception' does eventually materialize. So as a final concluding comment, even in films from different long take practices, or with different temporal tonalities, there is a similar mechanism at play in the respective long takes: a balancing between obvious and mysterious teleology, and between the nature and content of spectator engagement. Only the precise execution and function the mechanism plays within the overall formal, narrative, and generic context is different.

⁴⁴ Disregarding the studio imposed close-up to Lucy near the end of the long take that makes her 'true' emotions obvious for all to see.

Chapter 10. Conclusion

- Summing Up
- Radical Long Take Practice Today
- Long Take Practice: Statistical Guidelines for Further Research
- The Sense of an Ending

CHAPTER 10

Conclusion

Summing Up

Not every film that employs the long take in a dominant manner will necessarily lend itself to a philosophical reading of time. Neither, of course, was it the aim of my thesis to suggest this. After all, how many films are there that have ‘time’ as a direct subject? Not many, but this does not mean that time is not a factor. Even at the most mundane level, time is a feature of every film (formal, textual, and/or thematic). In some cases time is foregrounded at the narrative level, as in the ‘time dependent’ narrative. And in other cases time ‘seeps’ its way into the film’s theme and meaning, as I have argued with my three case study films. For example, in *The Magnificent Ambersons* the changing nature of social time alters the values and lifestyle of all that the Amberson family represented. In *Ugetsu*, cyclical time holds forth the hope of regeneration and return to a state of social unity. In *Stalker*, time expresses the sense of creation and magic that is necessary for the three characters to continue living with their spiritual burdens. I would only add that films that employ the long take to a large degree seem more likely to be the ones where time “‘seeps’ its way into the film’s theme and meaning.” To quote Victor F. Perkins,

The long take, with its presentation of time-flights that are not only fictional, does seem to draw film-makers who have a particular engagement with time, pastness and loss. Welles, Mizoguchi, Max Ophuls and at key moments Jean Renoir are notable for the way that the steadiness of the camera's attachment to a passage seems

gauged to capture movements into the distance, the dying of the light, the fading of an echo, in relation to the longing to hold the moment and to escape with it outside time.¹

To arrive at these and other observations across my thesis, I began with a working definition of the long take that was empirically based on those existing qualities that have led film writers (critics, theorists, scholars, etc.) to identify shots as long takes. Definition of the long take in film studies is overwhelmingly under-theorized. To address this weakness, my working definition proposed that a long take is a shot of at least 25” in duration and which usually contains at least one of the following formal and/or textual properties: a sense of formal and/or textual completeness, the quality of durational complexity, and a sense of a ‘soft’ formal/thematic determinism. This definition was used as part of a ‘philosophical’ formal-textual methodological approach to the long take informed by a ‘common sense’ philosophical understanding of time. This ‘common sense’ view sees time as being expressible by properties that are both outside the self (external time) and by properties within the self (internal time). External time becomes the ‘measurable’ aspects of the long take (duration, statistical analysis) which condition and are conditioned by the ‘less quantifiable’ aspects of a long take’s internal time (pertinent formal and textual properties within the shot). Internal and external time combine to express the ‘emotional quality,’ or the flow of time in a long take, which I called temporal tonality. My aim was to use this definition as a starting point to arrive at two goals of equal interest: 1) reveal the potentially rich interaction between time and the long take, and 2) offer a nuanced and theoretically rigorous understanding of the long

¹ V.F. Perkins, *The Magnificent Ambersons*. (London: British Film Institute, 1999), 68.

take at both a specific level (close textual analysis, individual film) and general level (definition, long take practice, narrative structure, narrative time).

One of the rewards of my philosophical formal-textual approach to the long take and time was to offer a fresh perspective on my three case study films. I will mention one overarching critical gain from each film that will prove evidence to this respect. Several writers have lamented that the pace of *The Magnificent Ambersons* slows in its second half, some blaming this on the studio mangling of the film.² First of all, my contextual statistical analysis gives precise formal-textual support to this reading by reflecting a shift in the ASL and temporal tonality of the long take from the first to the second half. More importantly, rather than explaining this shift to a slower pace as a sign of productorial meddling, I demonstrate how it fully embodies the film's thematic and philosophical discourse (linear time, industrial time, time becoming lugubrious for the Ambersons, etc.).³ In *Ugetsu*, I was able to underscore the thematic treatment of a life affirming, circular conception of time through the development of movement across the film and in key long takes, including dramatically charged 'rises and falls.' *Stalker*'s slow pace, 'minimalist' aesthetic, apocalyptic imagery, and tortured characterisations have led many writers to interpret the film's philosophical vision as one of despair and pessimism.⁴ My analysis argues for a different reading, seeing the eventual appearance of magic, wonderment and

² Joseph McBride, *Orson Welles* (New York: The Viking Press, The Cinema One series, 1972), 80-82, and James Naremore, *The Magic World of Orson Welles*, First Southern Methodist University Press edition, 1989 (Oxford University Press, 1978), 130.

³ This is not to say that the film was not damaged by studio interference. By all accounts, it certainly was. However, based on the changes as outlined by people like Carringer, McBride, Naremore, and Higham, it appears to me that the 'slowing' of the temporal tonality (to use my term) was always an integrated design of the film. The thematic drive of the film –the fall of the Amberson family– could only lead to such a pace. The final scene notwithstanding, it seems to me that the existing version of the film is true in spirit to this.

⁴ Jim Hoberman describes *Stalker* "As Russian in its tormented vision as *E.T.* is buoyantly American..." *Vulgar Modernism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 89. Jan Dawson calls it "One of cinema's most searingly pessimistic visions," *Sight & Sound* 49/4 (Autumn 1980): 240. Mark Le Fanu writes, "...if the film's tone is pessimistic –at least, reined in and low key– its imagery, and its harmonies, are extraordinarily grave and resplendent."

surprise ('creation time') in the long takes in the later city scenes as a sign of hope.

At the specific level of long take analysis, one of the noted definitional properties, durational complexity, relates to one of the most puzzling areas of time, the psychological (or subjective) experience of time. This includes the many factors that affect areas such as temporal judgement, recall (memory), and temporal perception. The durational complexity of radical long take films, such as *Stalker*, present a special challenge to an understanding of cinema time within this general field of psychological time. For example, why are certain viewers presented with slowly paced long takes not 'bored' by them, or do not experience them as having lasted 'an eternity'? The possible explanations for the apparent paradox of slow moving long takes that are experienced as 'timeless' or 'fleeting' is so complex, related to the inner workings of the brain, memory, and consciousness, that I could only hope to suggest tentative reasons. Hundreds of clinical and experimental studies have been conducted in these areas of time estimation and time perception, with fascinating but often inconclusive, puzzling, or contradictory results.⁵ Not being trained in the field of clinical psychology (or a chronopsychologist, as they are called), I am not in the position to accurately assess these extensive studies or best judge how they may relate to film viewing. However, I tried to account for some of these issues within my formal-textual methodology with the 'durational complexity' factor of a long take, and offered 'speculative' explanations concerning the effects of memory on duration and time estimation (short term memory vs. long term memory and increased and decreased arousal levels).

⁵ In "Perception and Estimation of Time" Paul Fraisse estimates that there were 15 clinical studies a year on the psychology of time between the 1900 and 1960, with an increase to 150 annually since 1970. He explains the increase as a change in research orientation from "behaviorist to cognitive approaches." *Annual Review of Psychology* 35 (1984): 3.

One explanation offered that was based within the field of art, was connecting the long take to an understanding of time expressed as change, and the process of gradual change in minimalist music. My reasoning here is that if the flow of time is conditioned by the awareness of change, then a process of gradual change will in turn effect an awareness of time. The result is that perceived time becomes 'diffuse' and less tied to objective clock-time.

The long take was approached at the more general level in two broader-based, question-driven case studies: Chapter 4, a categorical taxonomy of relationships between long take time and narrative time; and Chapter 5, an analysis of the long take as an expressive narrative agent in popular cinema. For Chapter 4, I used Gregory Currie's terms automorphic and homomorphic representation of time as a starting point for an in-depth analysis of the complex interactions between narrative time and the long take. This entailed using empirical research, theory, and formal-textual analysis to create a range of critical terms which will further our understanding of long take practice and of narrative structure at the specific shot/scene level. I remain confident that these terms can be fruitfully applied as analytical tools to a broad range of long take films. As they did in *Ugetsu*, where distinctions within automorphic and homomorphic time long take enabled me to better articulate the subtle way in which Mizoguchi creates tension between supernatural time and natural time.

Many factors were considered for Chapter 5: economic and industrial concerns, narrative protocol, and genre expectations. My conclusion was that popular narrative cinema allows for a great range of long take expressivity, with the single caveat that narrative and spectatorial interest be maintained. What is often overlooked in this respect, and brought to bear in my case study, are the many different sources of 'sanctioned pleasure' in popular cinema, beyond narrative proper, where the long take

is used expressively (spectacle, performance, and 'counter-diegetic' description). This 'permissible' range for long take expression in popular cinema does, however, have a limit: the radical long take practice with a 'slow' temporal tonality. I conclude this since no such film (let alone tradition) has yet to emerge from popular cinema (or from Hollywood may be more accurate). From this, I offer the following speculative comment: perhaps this form of cinematic time will not or can not ever be assimilated into mainstream cinema, making it, at least from a temporal-philosophical perspective, a potentially political or transgressive cinematic form.

Radical Long Take Practice Today

To place the full range of artistic expression of a long take into a temporal context, I outlined the factors and qualities which made up what I call a long take's 'temporal tonality.' My goal here was to take into some consideration time as it relates to spectatorship *and* textuality, while remaining true to my methodology of close formal-textual analysis. This included accounting for the 'nature' and 'content' of spectator engagement in a long take. In this respect, it is interesting to note that the two types of post-Bazinian long takes that Mark Le Fanu characterizes align themselves with the two extreme poles of my temporal tonality. Le Fanu divides the current state of long take aesthetics into (1) a flamboyant and kinetic style and (2) a stationary or quasi-stationary style, (which he titles 'virtuosity' vs. 'intensity').⁶ Category 1 aligns with the following type of temporal tonality: 'nature' of

⁶ Le Fanu, Mark. "Metaphysics of the "long take": some post-Bazinian reflections." *P.O.V.* 4 (December 1997) [journal on-line]; available from http://www.imv.aau.dk/publikationer/pov/Issue_04/section_1/artcla.html; Internet; accessed November 1998.

engagement (intense, active, rational, and continuous) and ‘content’ (story, plot and character development, with varied and kinetic action/events). Category 2 aligns with the following type of temporal tonality: ‘nature’ of engagement (contemplative, passive, sensual, and intermittent), and ‘content’ (mood, theme, and setting, with static or slowly varied action/events).

However, I do not agree with Le Fanu’s metaphysical assumption toward the latter type of long take: “the camera is not so much the star, but rather a kind of self-effacing servant, biding its time, waiting for the miraculous thing to happen...the unplanned moment...the unique, beautiful crystallisation of experience that comes into being in certain rare moments of epiphany.”⁷ In my thesis I argue quite the opposite, that moments of expressive long take use, regardless from which practice (dialectical, synthetic, or radical), are always articulations of great artistic design (whether shifting from one range of temporal tonality to another, or remaining fixed at one level). Le Fanu is reticent about whether the second type of long take (intensity and stationary or quasi-stationary) is “part of some larger totality, or the isolated fragments of a rout.”

I would reply that it is definitely part of a ‘larger totality’, that being the recent outgrowth of directors filming in the radical long take practice, that cuts across national and cultural lines. The number of films before World War 2, or even later, say 1960, belonging to the radical long take practice are very few, *The Story of the Last Chrysanthemums* (59” ASL), *Ordet* (1’08” ASL), and perhaps *The Vanquished* (43” ASL). That number has grown exponentially since the 1970’s, especially in the last 15 or so years. For a longer list I refer the reader to Appendix 3, but here are just a few examples of recent films/filmmakers which are filmed in a radical long take practice: Hou Hsiao-Hsein (Taiwan) *The Puppetmaster* (1993, 1’20” ASL), *Flowers*

⁷ Ibid.

of Shanghai (1998, 3'16" ASL), Tsai Ming-liang (Taiwan) *The River* (1997, 52" ASL), *The Hole* (2000, 48.4" ASL), Alexander Sokurov (Russia) *The Second Circle* (1990, 1'15" ASL), *Mother and Son* (1996, 1'08" ASL), Theo Angelopoulos (Greece) *The Suspended Step of the Stork* (1991, 1'44" ASL), *Ulysses' Gaze* (1995, 1'38" ASL), Raymond Depardon (France) *Paris* (1998, 51" ASL), Paul Vecchiali (France) *Encore* (1988, 4'36" ASL), Tamás Sas (Hungary) *Espresso* (1998), Bela Tarr (Hungary), *Werckmeister Harmonies* (2000, 3'43" ASL), Hong Sang-soo (Republic of Korea) *Virgin Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors* (2000, 50" ASL), Jean-Marie Straub, Danièle Huillet (France/Italy) *Sicilia!* (1999).⁸

There are many possible (and intersecting) reasons and factors for why this surge in the radical long take practice is happening now. In one respect, I see this 'totality' as part of a trans-global artistic/aesthetic counter-reaction. It is in the nature of artists to rebel against fashions, trends, and movements in their respective art. The increase in the 'slow' end of the temporal tonality and the radical long take practice can be seen as a manifestation of a cinematic reaction against the quickening pace of visual image processing (from news, to information, to entertainment). The cultural theorist Andreas Huyssen places this idea into a historical-postmodern context in his book *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*. Huyssen sees the late 20th century as a period obsessed with memory, which he feels accounts for the proliferation of monuments, museums, and memorials in the late 20th century. Huyssen relates memory as a form of antidote against fast-speed societies:

...I would argue that our obsessions with memory function as a reaction formation against the accelerating technical

⁸ In cases where there is no ASL listed, I am basing inclusion on personal theatrical screenings where I was unable to take an ASL, but where I can still guarantee that the film exhibits a long take practice. On a few occasions I am going by descriptions from other writers where it is undeniable that an extreme use of the long take was in use (for example, "The film is made up of about 10-15 very long takes...").

prowess that are transforming our *Lebenswelt* (lifeworld) in quite distinct ways. It ... represents the attempt to slow down information processing, to resist the dissolution of time in the synchronicity of the archive, to recover a mode of contemplation outside the universe of simulation and fast-speed information and cable networks, to claim some anchoring space in a world of puzzling and often threatening heterogeneity, non-synchronicity and information overload.⁹

The noted proliferation of monuments, museums, and memorials represent a memory 'anchored' in a materialness, in their solidity as objects, opposed to the fluid impermanence of the "channel flicking" generation. Huyssen explains,

One reason for the newfound strength of the museum and the monument in the public sphere may have something to do with the fact that both offer something that television denies: the material quality of the object¹⁰

I would argue a parallel account for the proliferation of the radical long take practice in roughly the same period, late 1970's onward: offering a 'materiality' in their heavily weighted, slow paced rhythm and temporality. In the case of one director, Alexander Sokurov, the parallel to the physical "concreteness" of the monument and memorial goes beyond the metaphorical. His films have a stillness and visual texture that border on "concrete-ness" -especially in *The Second Circle* (1990), *The Stone* (1992), *Whispering Pages* (1993), *Mother and Son* (1996), *Confession* (1998), *Moloch* (1999), and *Taurus* (2001). In some of these films, it seems as though we are looking through a grey-white ashen haze. A similar quality (though to a lesser degree) of 'frozen' or 'concrete-ness' appears in other radical long take practitioners: (late) Carl Dreyer, (late) Jean-Luc Godard, Andrei Tarkovsky, and Bela Tarr. French

⁹Andreas Huyssen, *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (Routledge: New York, 1995), 7.

¹⁰ Ibid., 225.

critic Barthelemy Amengual notes this quality in Tarkovsky, "...the materialism of Byzantine art, which provided a palpable body to the immateriality of the divine...finds an equivalent in the duration of Tarkovskii's shots, a duration that acquires an almost material weight."¹¹ Reading the slow paced quality of certain radical long take practice films as a 'counter-reaction' to fast-paced imagemaking is by no means an original observation. But it does go some way in explaining the trans-global breadth of the radical long take's increase.

I would add that you can characterize the cross-national nature of this upsurge in radical long take practice as a return to a pre-World War 1-like "International Style." Bordwell and Thompson explain that prior to the increased hegemony of the Hollywood classical style after World War 1, there was a freer interplay of visual style exchange between and among national cinemas:

Many aspects of film style were used in similar ways internationally. French, Italian, Danish, English, and American films, and to a lesser extent, films of other countries circulated widely outside the countries in which they were made....
...however, World War 1 interrupted the circulation of films among countries, and some nations developed distinctive film styles.¹²

Today, perhaps more than ever, non-American films (and to a lesser extent independent American films) rely on the dozens of major international and specialized film festivals around the world that have become key industry-related cites for distribution, sales, visibility, and market-entry. With directors often invited

¹¹ Alternative spelling, Tarkovskii, is author's. "Andrei Tarkovsky après sept films," *Etudes Cinématographique*, nos. 135-138 (1983), 157-177; quoted in Anna Lawton, "Art and Religion in the Films of Andrei Tarkovsky," *Christianity and the Arts in Russia*, p. 160, ed. William C. Broomfield and Milos M. Velimirovic, 1991.

¹² Kristin Thompson, David Bordwell, *Film History: An Introduction* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1994), 48-49.

as guests to present their work, and sharing their vision with other directors, this may explain the cross-national, cross-cultural increase in the radical long take practice. Even someone as relatively mainstream (yet fiercely independent) as Woody Allen has exhibited radical long take practice: *Bullets Over Broadway* (1994, 50.7" ASL).

Long Take Practice: Statistical Guidelines For Further Research

Continuing with long take practice, I used contextual statistical analysis (CSA) to study the overall narrative-structural component of the long take and arrived at three distinct groups of long take practices: dialectical, synthetic, and radical. Some of my conclusions in this regard were necessarily tentative, given that a much larger sampling would be needed to arrive at more conclusive statistical figures (ratio of long takes that open/close scenes, tendency of ASL to slow in latter half, etc.).

Although such a large sampling is beyond the range of this thesis, I plan to continue research in these areas. Within realistic limits, I have, however, provided an extended comparative sampling of films which will help establish benchmark statistical figures for each long take practice group (see Appendix 2 for a detailed comparative breakdown of these films).¹³ The categories represented in the graph below are:

average shot length (ASL), percentage of shots that are long takes (LT %), aggregate screen-time of all the long takes (LT Time), percentage of shots in the film that are under 10" (% Under 10"), aggregate screen-time of scenes that are dominated by

¹³ The extra sampled films are: *Vivre Sa Vie* (1963, Jean-Luc Godard), *Unbreakable* (2000, M. Night Shyamalan), *A Moment Of Innocence* (1996, Mohsen Makhmalbaf), *La Ronde* (1950, Max Ophuls), *The Cranes are Flying* (1957, Mikhail Kalatozov), *Christmas in August* (1998, Hur Jin-Ho), *Slacker* (1991, Richard Linklater), *Mighty Aphrodite* (1995, Woody Allen), *Maborosi* (1995, Kore-eda Hirokazu), *Stranger Than Paradise* (1984, Jim Jarmusch), *Ulysses' Gaze* (1995, Theo Angelopoulos), *Mother and Son* (1997, Alexander Sokurov), *The Second Circle* (1990, Alexander Sokurov), *The Hole* (2000, Tsai Ming-liang), *Spring in my Hometown* (1997, Lee Kwangmo).

long takes (**LT Scenes**), aggregate screen-time of scenes that are dominated by editing (**Edited Scenes**), and aggregate screen-time of scenes that are of a mixed mode (**Mixed Scenes**):

Dialectical Long Take Practice							
	ASL	LT %	LT Time	Under 10"	LT Scenes	Edited Scenes	Mixed Scenes
1-The Magnificent Ambersons	18"	18%	71%	66%	61%	33%	6%
2-Vivre sa Vie	26"	31%	77%	48%	67%	20%	13%
3-Unbreakable	19"	20%	68%	59%	33%	38%	29%
4-A Moment of Innocence	21"	25%	67%	51%	37%	42%	21%
5-La Ronde	18"	20%	62%	56%	30%	49%	21%
6-The Cranes are Flying	18"	21%	62%	48%	36%	39%	25%

Synthetic Long Take Practice							
	ASL	LT %	LT Time	Under 10"	LT Scenes	Edited Scenes	Mixed Scenes
1-Ugetsu	29"	43%	74%	16.5%	70%	13%	17%
2-Christmas in August	26"	39%	70%	19.5%	56%	12.5%	31.5%
3-Slacker	33"	36%	82%	44%	71%	11%	18%
4- Mighty Aphrodite	35"	39%	84%	36%	64%	16%	20%
5-Maborosi	25"	34%	62%	14%	55%	18%	27%
6-Vive L'Amour	36"	51%	81%	15%	71.3%	2.1%	26.6%

Radical Long Take Practice							
	ASL	LT %	LT Time	Under 10"	LT Scenes	Edited Scenes	Mixed Scenes
1-Stalker	1'07"	67%	94%	14%	100%	0%	0%
2-Ulysses' Gaze	1'38"	71.3%	91%	19%	98%	1.9%	0%
3-Mother and Son	1'08"	73%	93%	1.7%	100%	0%	0%
4-Second Circle	1'15"	71%	93%	8.3%	100%	0%	0%
5-The Hole	48"	67%	91%	8.6%	94%	3.3%	2.7%
6-Spring in my Hometown	49"	69%	91%	3.5%	96.2%	1.2%	2.6%

Although the closest matches were in the radical long take group, a consistent pattern is present in the other groups as well (and I am confident that a broader sampling would continue to discover comparable matches in all three categories.)¹⁴ Moving from the dialectical to radical group, we see a gradual increase in the ASL, percentage of shots that are long takes, aggregate long take screen-time, and aggregate long take dominated scene time, with a concomitant decrease in the percentage of shots under 10" and aggregate editing dominated scene time.

¹⁴Obviously, other films by my case study directors would have made excellent matches, but I purposely avoided choosing them to broaden my base.

The comparative figures work uniformly for the radical group, but also help to reinforce the central difference between the dialectical and synthetic group. In the latter group, editing works in support of the long take by being more consistently incorporated *within* its long take practice; whereas in a dialectical long take practice the filmmaker is more likely to isolate editing from the long take. For example, in *Ugetsu*, *Slacker*, and *Stranger Than Paradise*, there are only a few instances where shots under 10" appear consecutively, whereas this occurs frequently in the dialectical group. The most important statistical figure in this regard is the aggregate time for scenes dominated by editing, where we see a marked increase from group to group. Given that long take practice is dependent on many statistical factors, ASL on its own can not be trusted as a defining figure. Indeed, this is the very point of contextual statistical analysis. However, based on my present sampling I suggest the following ASL range for each category: Dialectical (16"- 26"), Synthetic (25"- 41"), and Radical (40" and higher).

In terms of other generalities, it is important to note that my long take practice grouping cuts across nationality, genre, style, narrative type, and, to a lesser extent, industry mode. Although I have noted a definitive slant toward 'slow' temporal tonality in the radical long take group, this appears to be the only strong tendency I could find, and does not preclude the appearance of popular films such as *Bullets Over Broadway* (1994, 50.7" ASL), *Running Time* (2'02" ASL), *Rope* (7'14" ASL), and *Under Capricorn* (41" ASL). I should reiterate that my breakdown is not meant to accommodate *all* films that employ the long take. There are clearly films that use the long take in an expressive manner but which do not fall under the groupings I have articulated (because the long take is used more selectively, less frequently, in isolated scenes, etc.).

For example, *Chinese Roulette* (1976), directed by Rainer W. Fassbinder and photographed by Michael Ballhaus, is well known for its expressive use of the long take and camera movement. It contains the same amount of long takes as *The Magnificent Ambersons*, 50, in less screen-time (81'19" to 86'04"), and with a lower percentage of shots under 10" (49% to 66%). However, the long takes represent only 37% of the film's total screen-time and only 13% of its total shots, which accounts for its quicker ASL (13"). Therefore *Chinese Roulette*, although expressive in its use of the long take, does not employ the long take in a sustained enough manner to qualify for either dialectical or synthetic long take practice. To be conclusive, I would need to sample far more films, but at this point I would suggest that any film whose aggregate long take screen-time is below 55%-60%, would not meet the statistical criteria for one of the long take practice groups. This would distinguish between, to paraphrase Lutz Bacher, a true long take film as opposed to a film with tendencies toward long take. My articulation of these three modes of long take filming practices, although tentative in some areas, is something which I feel will yield especially important insight for long take theory, style, and analysis, and sets my thesis apart from any existing long take study.

The Sense of an Ending

As can be gathered by this conclusion, an ongoing reaffirmation (and inspiration) of the need for this thesis has been the increasing realisation that there are more directors consistently and rigorously using the long take today than at any other period in film history. To my mind, this underscored both the impoverished state of long take analysis in film studies, and the need for research to help us better

understand and appreciate this recent growth in the use of the long take. I feel this thesis has made significant strides to this end. This thesis was also motivated by what I felt was the neglect of time as an area of research in film studies. This, of course, may be partly due to the slippery concept of time itself. As many philosophers have admitted, time is a simple concept to intuitively understand, but a difficult one to articulate. However, this has not stopped the widespread appearance of time studies in fields outside of philosophy (economics, theology, social study, biology, bio-philosophy, psychology, mathematics, physics, art history, politics, ideology, and music).¹⁵ Hence to pigeonhole time as a purely philosophical discipline, as film studies seems to have done, is myopic. I grant that my study can not attempt to single-handedly address this omission. But I hope to have borne some evidence to the potential that time study holds for film studies by bringing a 'common sense' philosophical understanding of time to my formal-textual methodological approach to the long take.

¹⁵One recent example of the widespread application of time is the book *Inventing Bergson: Cultural Politics and the Parisian Avant-Garde* by Mark Antliff (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993). Antliff demonstrates how the extension of Bergsonian philosophy by artists, revolutionaries and political thinkers in early 20th century France crystallized into arguments for/against political ideologies as far ranging as Fascism, Nationalism, anti-capitalism, and anarchy. Other books that deal with time in a variety of ways beyond philosophy proper include: (sociology) Joseph E. McGrath & Janice R. Kelly, *Time & Human Interaction: Toward a Social Psychology of Time* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1986), Michael O'Malley, *Watching Time: A History of American Time* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), Barbara Adam, *Timewatch* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), (urban planning) *What Time is this Place?* Kevin Lynch, (Massachusetts and London, England: The MIT Press Cambridge, 1972), and (politics) Jeremy Rifkin, *Time Wars* New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1987).

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Appendix 1

Scene by Scene Breakdowns¹

1) *The Magnificent Ambersons*

Shot/Length/Description

Credits: 0'00"-15"

Scene 1: Meeting the Ambersons and the late 19th century (15"-2'12")

- 1) 15"-1'10" (55")
 - 2) 1'10"-1'15" (05")
 - 3) 1'15"-1'20" (05")
 - 4) 1'20"-1'24" (04")
 - 5) 1'24"-1'30" (06")
 - 6) 1'30"-1'34" (04")
 - 7) 1'34"-1'42" (08")
 - 8) 1'42"-1'51" (09")
 - 9) 1'51"-1'59" (08")
 - 10) 1'59"-2'07" (08")
 - 11) 2'07"-2'12" (05")
- Total: 1'57" (117")/11 shots = 10.6" ASL (1 long take)**

Scene 2: Eugene Courting Isabel (2'12"-5'32")

- 12) 2'12"-2'28" (16")
- 13) 2'28"-2'36" (08")
- 14) 2'36"-2'47" (11")
- 15) 2'47"-2'50" (03")
- 16) 2'50"-3'01" (11")
- 17) 3'01"-3'04" (03")
- 18) 3'04"-3'06" (02")
- 19) 3'06"-3'08" (02")
- 20) 3'08"-3'12" (04")
- 21) 3'12"-3'29" (17")
- 22) 3'29"-3'43" (14")
- 23) 3'43"-3'46" (03")
- 24) 3'46"-3'49" (03")
- 25) 3'49"-4'00" (11")
- 26) 4'00"-4'03" (03")
- 27) 4'03"-4'10" (07")
- 28) 4'10"-4'14" (04")
- 29) 4'14"-4'16" (02")
- 30) 4'16"-4'18" (02")
- 31) 4'18"-4'21" (03")
- 32) 4'21"-4'35" (14")
- 33) 4'35"-4'40" (05")

¹ Scene: "A unified action within the film's plot that normally takes place in a single location and in a single period of time...Sometimes a single scene may take place in more than one location -for example, when the single action of a car chase moves us from place to place." (Ira Konigsberg, *The Complete Film Dictionary*, London) Bloomsbury, 1987, 302. In terms of scene segmentation, there are two possible strategies, one that could be called "production oriented" and one "viewer oriented." The former would dissect scenes more or less according to how they were shot, such as day/night, interior/exterior, etc. The latter would dissect scenes according to the natural flow of the narrative. I have selected the latter method. Initially these breakdowns contained brief descriptions of each shot, but this made the length unwieldy so I decided to delete the descriptions and leave only the pure statistical figures.

34) 4'40"-5'32" (52")

Total: 3'20" (200")/23 shots = 8.6" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 3: The "Princely Terror" (Introduction of George Amberson Minafer) (5'32"-8'51")

35) 5'32"-5'52" (20")

36) 5'52"-5'57" (05")

37) 5'57"-6'01" (04")

38) 6'01"-6'04" (03")

39) 6'04"-6'06" (02")

40) 6'06"-6'10" (04")

41) 6'10"-6'17" (07")

42) 6'17"-6'37" (20")

43-60) 6'37"-7'27" (17 shots/50" = 2.9" ASL) Montage of Little Georgy fighting

61) 7'27"-8'13" (46")

62) 8'13"-8'21" (08")

63) 8'21"-8'24" (03")

64) 8'24"-8'31" (07")

65) 8'31"-8'37" (06")

66) 8'37"-8'41" (04")

67) 8'41"-8'51" (10")

Total: 3'19" (199 sec)/33 shots = 06" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 4: The Ball (8'51"-19'39")

68) 8'51"-9'05" (14")

69) 9'05"-9'34" (29")

70) 9'34"-9'36" (02")

71) 9'36"-9'37" (01")

72) 9'37"-9'45" (08")

73) 9'45"-9'50" (05")

74) 9'50"-9'55" (05")

75) 9'55"-9'59" (04")

76) 9'59"-10'57" (58")

77) 10'57"-11'09" (12")

78) 11'09"-11'58" (49")

79) 11'58"-12'56" (58")

80) 12'56"-13'58" (1'02")

81) 13'58"-15'30" (1'32")

82) 15'30"-16'54" (1'24")

83) 16'54"-17'00" (06")

84) 17'00"-17'09" (09")

85) 17'09"-17'44" (35")

86) 17'44"-17'48" (04")

87) 17'48"-17'56" (08")

88) 17'56"-19'39" (1'43")

Total: 10'48" (648")/21 shots = 31" ASL (9 long takes)

Scene 5: Leave Taking the Ambersons (19'39"-20'20")

89) 19'39"-19'46" (07")

90) 19'46"-20'20" (34")

Total: 41" (41 sec)/2 shots = 20.5" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 6: Post-Ball Gossip (20'20"-23'55")

91) 20'20"-20'49" (09")

92) 20'49"-20'52" (03")

93) 20'52"-20'55" (03")

94) 20'55"-20'58" (03")

95) 20'58"-21'02" (04")
 96) 21'02"-21'12" (10")
 97) 21'12"-21'25" (13")
 98) 21'25"-21'27" (02")
 99) 21'27"-21'32" (05")
 100) 21'32"-21'34" (02")
 101) 21'34"-21'44" (10")
 102) 21'44"-21'53" (09")
 103) 21'53"-23'55" (2'02")
Total: 3'35" (215")/13 shots = 16.5"ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 7: The Sleigh Ride (23'55"-28'40")

104) 23'55"-24'01" (06")
 105) 24'01"-24'06" (05")
 106) 24'06"-24'10" (04")
 107) 24'10"-24'13" (03")
 108) 24'13"-24'16" (03")
 109) 24'16"-24'20" (04")
 110) 24'20"-24'22" (02")
 111) 24'22"-24'29" (07")
 112) 24'29"-24'31" (02")
 113) 24'31"-24'43" (12")
 114) 24'43"-24'47" (04")
 115) 24'47"-24'53" (06")
 116) 24'53"-24'58" (05")
 117) 24'58"-25'01" (03")
 118) 25'01"-25'03" (02")
 119) 25'03"-25'06" (03")
 120) 25'06"-25'09" (03")
 121) 25'09"-25'11" (02")
 122) 25'11"-25'13" (02")
 123) 25'13"-25'15" (02")
 124) 25'15"-25'17" (02")
 125) 25'17"-25'20" (03")
 126) 25'20"-25'33" (13")
 127) 25'33"-25'49" (16")
 128) 25'49"-25'51" (02")
 129) 25'51"-25'53" (02")
 130) 25'53"-26'02" (09")
 131) 26'02"-26'06" (04")
 132) 26'06"-26'17" (11")
 133) 26'17"-26'25" (08")
 134) 26'25"-26'31" (06")
 135) 26'31"-26'40" (09")
 136) 26'40"-26'43" (03")
 137) 26'43"-26'48" (05")
 138) 26'48"-26'50" (02")
 139) 26'50"-26'52" (02")
 140) 26'52"-26'54" (02")
 141) 26'54"-26'55" (01")
 142) 26'55"-27'02" (07")
 143) 27'02"-27'07" (05")
 144) 27'07"-27'12" (05")
 145) 27'12"-27'16" (04")
 146) 27'16"-27'20" (04")
 147) 27'20"-27'24" (04")
 148) 27'24"-27'28" (04")
 149) 27'28"-27'36" (08")
 150) 27'36"-27'38" (02")

151) 27'38"-27'45" (07")
 152) 27'45"-27'48" (03")
 153) 27'48"-27'53" (05")
 154) 27'53"-27'56" (03")
 155) 27'56"-28'04" (08")
 156) 28'04"-28'07 (03")
 157) 28'07"-28'09" (02")
 158) 28'09"-28'12" (03")
 159) 28'12"-28'15" (03")
 160) 28'15"-28'18" (03")
 161) 28'18"-28'24" (06")
 162) 28'24"-28'28" (04")
 163) 28'28"-28'40" (12")
Total: 4'45" (285")/60 shots = 4.7"ASL (0 long takes)

Scene 8: Wilbur's Funeral (28'40"-29'55")

164) 28'40"-29'05" (25")
 165) 29'05"-29'39" (34")
 166) 29'39"-29'45" (06")
 167) 29'45"-29'55" (10")
Total: 1'15" (75")/4 shots = 18.7" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 9) Strawberry Shortcake (29'55"-34'25")

168) 29'55"-30'00" (05")
 169) 30'00"-34'25" (4'25")
Total: 4'30" (270")/2 shots = 2'25" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 10: Eugene's Factory (34'25"-36'10")

170) 34'25"-36'10" (1'45")
Total: 1'45" (105sec)/1 shot = 1'45" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 11: Isabel and Eugene Courting (36'10"-36'45")

171) 36'10"-36'16" (06")
 172) 36'16"-36'33" (17")
 172) 36'33"-36'45" (12")
Total: 35" (35" sec)/3 shots = 11.6" ASL (0 long takes)

Scene 12: George's Marriage Proposal (36'45"-39'10")

174) 36'45"-36'54" (09")
 175) 36'54"-39'10" (2'16")
Total: 2'25" (145 sec)/2 shots = 1'12.5" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 13: The Major's Heavy Heart (39'10"-39'58")

176) 39'10"-39'58" (48")
Total: 48" (48 sec)/1 shot = 48" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 14: The Dinner (39'58"-44'00")

177) 39'58"-40'03" (05")
 178) 40'03"-40'08" (05")
 179) 40'08"-40'16" (08")
 180) 40'16"-40'20" (04")
 181) 40'20"-40'31" (11")
 182) 40'31"-40'57" (26")

183) 40'57"-41'02" (05")
 184) 41'02"-41'11" (09")
 185) 41'11"-41'13" (02")
 186) 41'13"-41'15" (02")
 187) 41'15"-41'18" (03")
 188) 41'18"-41'22" (04")
 189) 41'22"-41'28" (06")
 190) 41'28"-41'30" (02")
 191) 41'30"-41'32" (02")
 192) 41'32"-42'14" (42")
 193) 42'14"-42'16" (02")
 194) 42'16"-42'32" (16")
 195) 42'32"-42'34" (02")
 196) 42'34"-42'40" (06")
 197) 42'40"-42'44" (04")
 198) 42'44"-43'06" (22")
 199) 43'06"-43'27" (21")
 200) 43'27"-44'00" (33")
Total: 4'02" (242")/24 shots = 10" ASL (3 long takes)

Scene 15: Spreading the Gossip (44'00"-46'54")

201) 44'00"-46'54" (2'54")
Total: 2'54" (174")/1 shot = 2'54" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 16: Confronting Mrs Johnson (46'54"-48'10")

202) 46'54"-48'10" (1'16")
Total: 1'16" (76")/1 shot = 1'16" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 17: Interrupting Uncle Jack's Bath (48'10"-48'57")

203) 48'10"-48'13" (03")
 204) 48'13"-48'17" (04")
 205) 48'17"-48'39" (22")
 206) 48'39"-48'44" (05")
 207) 48'44"-48'46" (02")
 208) 48'46"-48'50" (04")
 209) 48'50"-48'52" (02")
 210) 48'52"-48'57" (05")
Total: 47" (47")/8 shots = 5.8" ASL (0 long takes)

Scene 18: Eugene's Discontent (48'57"-50'36")

211) 48'57"-49'05" (08")
 212) 49'05"-49'07" (02")
 213) 49'07"-49'10" (03")
 214) 49'10"-49'12" (02")
 215) 49'12"-49'42" (30")
 216) 49'42"-49'46" (04")
 217) 49'46"-49'55" (09")
 218) 49'55"-50'00" (05")
 219) 50'00"-50'02" (02")
 220) 50'02"-50'06" (04")
 221) 50'06"-50'09" (03")
 222) 50'09"-50'11" (02")
 223) 50'11"-50'36" (25")
Total: 1'39" (99 sec)/13 shots = 7.6" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 19: George & Fanny Gossip on the Staircase (50'36"-53'18")

224) 50'36"-50'43" (07")

225) 50'43"-50'49" (06")

226) 50'49"-51'40" (51")

227) 51'40"-53'18" (1'38")

Total: 2'42" (162")/4 shots =40.5" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 20: Eugene's Love Letter to Isabel (53'18"-55'52")

228) 53'18"-54'10" (52")

229) 54'10"-54'49" (39")

230) 54'49"-55'52" (1'03")

Total: 2'34" (154")/3 shots = 51" ASL (3 long takes)

Scene 21: George Confronts Isabel About the Letter (55'52"-58'17")

231) 55'52"-56'08" (16")

232) 56'08"-56'40" (32")

233) 56'40"-56'43" (03")

234) 56'43"-56'45" (02")

235) 56'45"-56'52" (07")

236) 56'52"-56'56" (04")

237) 56'56"-56'59" (03")

238) 56'59"-57'01" (02")

239) 57'01"-57'08" (07")

240) 57'08"-57'5" (07")

241) 57'15"-57'17" (02")

242) 57'17"-57'35" (18")

243) 57'35"-57'37" (02")

244) 57'37"-58'17" (40")

Total: 2'25" (145 sec)/14 shots = 10.3" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 22: Lucy Conceals Her Emotions (58'17"-61'47")

245) 58'17"-61'17" (3'00")

246) 61'17"-61'23" (06")

247) 61'23"-61'26" (03")

248) 61'26"-61'47" (21")

Total: 3'30" (210")/4 shots =52.5" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 23: News of Isabel (61'47"-64'12")

249) 61'47"-62'02" (15")

250) 62'02"-64'12" (2'10")

Total: 2'25" (145")/2 shots =1'12.5" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 24: Isabel Returns Home from Trip Abroad (64'12"-64'48")

251) 64'12"-64'18" (06")

252) 64'18"-64'29" (11")

253) 64'29"-64'48" (19")

Total: 36" (36")/3 shots = 12" ASL (0 long takes)

Scene 25: Eugene is Thwarted Again (64'48"-66'59")

254) 64'48"-66'31" (1'43")

255) 66'31"-66'36" (05")

256) 66'36"-66'40" (04")
257) 66'40"-66'59" (19")
Total: 2'11" (131" sec)/4 shots = 32.8" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 26: George at Isabel's Deathbed (66'59"-68'51")

258) 66'59"-68'51" (1'52")
Total: 1'52" (112")/1 shot = 1'52" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 27: Isabel's Death (68'51"-69'18")

259) 68'51"-69'18" (27")
Total: 27" (27")/1 shot = 27" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 28: The Major's Final Thoughts (69'18"-71'04")

260) 69'18"-71'04" (1'46")
Total: 1'46" (106")/1 shot = 1'46" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 29: At the Train Station (71'04"-72'57")

261) 71'04"-72'57" (1'53")
Total: 1'53" (113")/1 shot = 1'53" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 30: "Rides-Down-Everything" (72'57"-75'51")

262) 72'57"-75'51" (2'54")
Total: 2'54" (174")/1 shot = 2'54" 4 ASL (1 long take)

Scene 31: The Cold Boiler (75'51"-79'33")

263) 75'51"-77'15" (1'24")
264) 77'15"-77'19" (04")
265) 77'19"-78'01" (42")
266) 78'01"-78'06" (05")
267) 78'06"-79'33" (1'27")
Total: 3'42" (222")/5 shots = 44.4"ASL (3 long takes)

Scene 32: George at the Lawyer's Office (79'33"-81'10")

268) 79'33"-81'10" (1'37")
Total: 1'37" (97")/1 shot = 1'37" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 33: The Walk Home Through the "Strange, Changed City" (81'10"-81'55")

269-277) 81'10"-81'55" (45")
Total: 45" (45")/9 shots = 5" ASL (0 long takes)

Scene 34: George's "Comeuppance" (81'55"-83'01")

278) 81'55"-83'01" (1'06")
Total: 1'06" (66")/1 shot = 1'06" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 35: The Accident (83'01"-83'18")

279) 83'01"-83'18" (17")
Total: 17" (17")/1 shot = 17" ASL (0 long take)

Scene 36: At Eugene's Office (83'18"-84'42")

280) 83'18"-83'24" (06")
281) 83'24"-83'30" (06")
282) 83'30"-84'18" (48")
283) 84'18"-84'42" (24")
Total: 1'24" (84")/4 shots = 21" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 37: The Reconciliation (84'42"-86'19")

284) 84'42"-86'19" (1'37")
Total: 1'37" (97 sec)/1 shot = 1'37" ASL (1 long take)

Closing Credits (86'19"-87'40")

86'04"= 5164 (284) = 18"ASL

2) Ugetsu

Shot/Length/Description

Credits 00"-2'14"

Scene 1: Preparing The First Pottery Sale (2'14"-4'21")

1) 2'14"-3'02" (48")
2) 3'02"-3'37" (35")
3) 3'37"-3'50" (13")
4) 3'50"-4'21" (31")
Total: 2'07" (127")/ 4 shots = 32" ASL (3 long takes)

Scene 2: On the Way to the City (4'21"-4'40")

5) 4'21"-4'40" (19")
Total: 19" (19")/1 shot = 19" ASL (0 long takes)

Scene 3: Back at the Village (Kohoku in Northern Omi Province) (4'40"-6'15")

6) 4'40"-4'59 (19")
7) 4'59"-5'36" (37")
8) 5'36"-6'15" (39")
Total: 1'35" (95")/3 shots = 32" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 4: Tobei's Great Lure (Town of Nagahama) (6'15"-7'29")

9) 6'15"-6'30" (15")
10) 6'30"-6'39 (09")
11) 6'39-7'29" (50")
Total: 1'14" (74")/3 shots = 25" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 5: The Encroaching Civil War (7'29"-10'16")

12) 7'29"-8'51" (1'22")
13) 8'51"-10'16" (1'25")
Total: 2'47" (167") 2 shots = 1'23'5" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 6: Making Pottery at the Workshop (10'16"-12'21")

14) 10'16"-11'00" (44")
15) 11'00"-11'24 (24")

- 16) 11'24"-11'37 (13")
- 17) 11'37"-11'49" (12")
- 18) 11'49"-12'01" (12")
- 19) 12'01"-12'21" (20")

Total: 2'05" (125")/6 shots = 21" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 7: Army Raids at Night (12'21"-16'35")

- 20) 12'21"-12'30" (09")
- 21) 12'30"-12'47" (17")
- 22) 12'47"-13'12" (25")
- 23) 13'12"-13'31' (19")
- 24) 13'31'-13'35" (04")
- 25) 13'35"-13'52" (17")
- 26) 13'52"-14'04" (12")
- 27) 14'04"-14'14" (10")
- 28) 14'14"-14'30" (16")
- 29) 14'30"-14'47" (17")
- 30) 14'47"-15'13" (26")
- 31) 15'13"-15'18" (05")
- 32) 15'18"-15'23 (05")
- 33) 15'23-15' 33 (10")
- 34) 15'33-16' 06" (33")
- 35) 16'06"-16'11 (05")
- 36) 16'11-16'35" (24")

Total: 4'14" (254 sec)/17" shots = 15" ASL (3 long takes)

Scene 8: Villagers in Woods (Genjuro and Tobei Face Temptation) (16'35"-22'11")

- 37) 16'35"-16'46" (11")
- 38) 16'46"-17'05" (19")
- 39) 17'05"-17'55 (50")
- 40) 17'55"-18'19" (24")
- 41) 18'19"-18'34" (15")
- 42) 18'34"-18'57" (23")
- 43) 18'57"-19'29" (32")
- 44) 19'29"-20'04" (35")
- 45) 20'04"-20'48" (44")
- 46) 20'48"-21'25" (37")
- 47) 21'25"-22'11" (46")

Total 5'36" (336")/11 shots = 30.5" ASL (6 long takes)

Scene 9: The Boat Journey (22'11"-27'28")

- 48) 22'11"-22'39" (28")
- 49) 22'39"-23'33" (54")
- 50) 23'33"-24'22" (49")
- 51) 24'22"-24'39" (17")
- 52) 24'39"-24'51" (12")
- 53) 24'51"-25'10" (19")
- 54) 25'10"-25'27" (17")
- 55) 25'27"-25'54" (27")
- 56) 25'54"-25'59" (05")
- 57) 25'59"-26'19" (20")
- 58) 26'19"-27'28" (1'09")

Total: 5'17" (317")/11 shots = 29" ASL (5 long takes)

Scene 10: The Return and the Departure (27'28"-29'00")

- 59) 27'28"-27'39" (11")

60) 27'39"-27'45" (06")
 61) 27'45"-28'00" (15")
 62) 28'00"-28'05" (05")
 63) 28'05"-28'27" (22")
 64) 28'27"-29'00" (33")
Total: 1'32" (92")/6 shots = 15" ASL (1 long takes)

Scene 11: At the City of Omizo Castletown (29'00"-32'45")

65) 29'00"-29'28" (28")
 66) 29'28"-29'49" (21")
 67) 29'49"-30'04" (15")
 68) 30'04"-30'20" (16")
 69) 30'20"-30'58" (38")
 70) 30'58"-31'09" (11")
 71) 31'09"-31'12" (03")
 72) 31'12"-31'33" (21")
 73) 31'33"-31'54" (21")
 74) 31'54"-32'05" (11")
 75) 32'05"-32'45" (40")
Total: 3'45" (225")/ 11 shots = 20" ASL (3 long takes)

Scene 12: Ohama's Downfall (32'45"-35'54")

76) 32'45"-33'21" (36")
 77) 33'21"-33'51" (30")
 78) 33'51"-34'09" (18")
 79) 34'09"-34'16" (07")
 80) 34'16"-34'33" (17")
 81) 34'33"-34'50" (17")
 82) 34'50"-35'16" (26")
 83) 35'16"-35'54" (38")
Total: 3'09" (189")/8 shots = 24" ASL (4 long takes)

Scene 13: Genjuro's Daydream (35'54"-38'38")

84) 35'54"-36'27" (33")
 85) 36'27"-36'37" (10")
 86) 36'37"-36'44" (07")
 87) 36'44"-36'50" (06")
 88) 36'50"-37'04" (14")
 89) 37'04"-37'10" (06")
 90) 37'10"-37'13" (03")
 91) 37'13"-37'21" (08")
 92) 37'21"-38'00" (39")
 93) 38'00"-38'09" (09")
 94) 38'09"-38'15" (06")
 95) 38'15"-38'20" (05")
 96) 38'20"-38'23" (03")
 97) 38'23"-38'38" (15")
Total: 2'44" (164")/14 shots = 12" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 14: The Second Journey (38'38"-51'51")

98) 38'38"-38'57" (19")
 99) 38'57"-39'07" (10")
 100) 39'07"-39'18" (11")
 101) 39'18"-39'54" (36")
 102) 39'54"-40'30" (36")
 103) 40'30"-41'34" (1'04")

104) 41'34"-41'44" (10")
 105) 41'44"-41'56" (12")
 106) 41'56"-42'10" (14")
 107) 42'10"-42'30" (20")
 108) 42'30"-43'25" (55")
 109) 43'25"-44'06" (41")
 110) 44'06"-45'33" (1'27")
 111) 45'33"-46'24" (51")
 112) 46'24"-47'04" (40")
 113) 47'04"-47'11" (07")
 114) 47'11"-47'27" (16")
 115) 47'27"-47'42" (15")
 116) 47'42"-47'49" (07")
 117) 47'49"-48'41" (52")
 118) 48'41"-50'18" (1'37")
 119) 50'18"-50'32" (14")
 120) 50'32"-50'36" (04")
 121) 50'36"-51'51" (1'15")
Total: 13'13" (793")/24 shots=33" ASL (11 long takes)

Scene 15: A Mysterious Marriage (51'51"-54'03")

122) 51'51"-52'43" (52")
 123) 52'43"-53'43" (1'00")
 124) 53'43"-54'03" (20")
Total: 2'12" (132")/3 shots = 44" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 16: The Bath Scene (54'03"-55'23")

125) 54'03"-54'36" (33")
 126) 54'36"-55'03" (27")
 127) 55'03"-55'23" (20")
Total: 1'20" (80")/3 shots = 27" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 17: The Picnic (55'23"-56'43")

128) 55'23"-55'54" (31')
 129) 55'54"-56'18" (24")
 130) 56'18"-56'43" (25")
Total: 1'20" (80")/3 shots = 27" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 18: Wife in Danger (56'43"-58'32")

131) 56'43"-57'42" (59")
 132) 57'42"-57'51" (09")
 133) 57'51"-58'15" (24")
 134) 58'15"-58'32" (17")
Total: 1'49" (109")/4 shots = 27" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 19: Miyagi's Death (58'32"-60'14")

135) 58'32"-60'14" (1'42")
Total: 1'42" (102")/1 shot = 1'42" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 20: Tobei Claims a Valuable Head (60'14"-62'11")

136) 60'14"-60'27" (13")
 137) 60'27"-60'47" (20")
 138) 60'47"-61'01" (14")

139) 61'01"-62'11" (1'10")
Total: 1'57" (117")/ 4 shots = 29" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 21: Tobei Becomes a Samurai (62'11"-63'07")

140) 62'11"-62'17" (06")
141) 62'17"-62'34" (17")
142) 62'34"-63'07" (33")
Total: 56" (56")/ 3 shots = 19" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 22: Tobei Meets His Fallen Wife (63'07"-69'28")

143) 63'07"-63'38" (31")
144) 63'38"-64'35" (57")
145) 64'35"-65'04" (29")
146) 65'04"-65'16" (12")
147) 65'16"-66'24" (1'08")
148) 66'24"-66'40" (16")
149) 66'40"-66'53" (13")
150) 66'53"-67'44" (51")
151) 67'44"-69'28" (1'44")
Total: 6'21" (381")/9 shots = 42" ASL (6 long takes)

Scene 23: The Shopkeeper's Fear (69'28"-70'21")

152) 69'28"-69'43" (15")
153) 69'43"-70'21" (38")
Total: 53" (53")/2 shots = 26.5" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 24: The Buddhist Monk's Warning (70'21"-72'43")

154) 70'21"-70'58" (37")
155) 70'58"-72'43" (1'45")
Total: 2'22" (142")/2 shots = 1'11" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 25: Back at the Kutsuki Mansion (72'43"-79'23")

156) 72'43"-73'00" (17")
157) 73'00"-73'34" (34")
158) 73'34"-74'17" (43")
159) 74'17"-75'15" (58")
160) 75'15"-75'55" (40")
161) 75'55"-76'03" (08")
162) 76'03"-76'08" (05")
163) 76'08"-77'06" (58")
164) 77'06"-77'11" (05")
165) 77'11"-77'23" (12")
166) 77'23"-77'41" (18")
167) 77'41"-77'55" (14")
168) 77'55"-78'13" (18")
169) 78'13"-78'27" (14")
170) 78'27"-78'30" (03")
171) 78'30"-78'48" (18")
172) 78'48"-78'55" (07")
173) 78'55"-79'02" (07")
174) 79'02"-79'23" (21")
Total: 6'40" (400")/19 shots = 21" ASL (5 long takes)

Scene 26: Genjuro Awakens as From a Dream (79'23"-82'09")

175) 79'23"-79'55" (32")
176) 79'55"-80'23" (28")
177) 80'23"-80'45" (22")
178) 80'45"-82'09" (1'24")
Total: 2'46" (166")/4 shots = 42" ASL (3 long takes)

Scene 27: The Homecoming (82'09"-89'34")

179) 82'09"-82'44" (35")
180) 82'44"-83'45" (1'01")
181) 83'45"-85'44" (1'59")
182) 85'44"-87'35" (1'51")
183) 87'35"-89'34" (1'59")
Total: 7'25" (445")/5 shots = 1'29" ASL (5 long takes)

Scene 28: The Morning After (89'34"-92'03")

184) 89'34"-89'45" (11")
185) 89'45"-90'38" (53")
186) 90'38"-92'03" (1'25")
Total: 2'29" (149")/ 3 shots = 50" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 29: Tobei Returns to His Senses (92'03"-92'43")

187) 92'03"-92'43" (40")
Total: 40" (40")/1 shot = 40" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 30: Back to Work (92'43"- 96'18")

188) 92'43"-93'47" (1'04")
189) 93'47"-94'20" (33")
190) 94'20"-94'27" (07")
191) 94'27"-95'09" (42")
192) 95'09"-95'26" (17")
193) 95'26"-96'18" (52")
Total: 3'35" (215")/6 shots = 36" ASL (4 long takes)

193 shots/5644"/94'04" = 29" ASL

3) *Stalker*

Scene 1: The Bar (0'00"-3'11")

1) 0'00"-3'11" (3'11")
Total: 3'11" (191")/1 shot = 3'11" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 2: What is the Zone? (3'11"-3'46")

2) 3'11"-3'46" (35")
Total: 35" (35")/1 shot = 35" ASL (1 long takes)

Scene 3: The Awakening (3'46"-12'41")

3) 3'46"-4'59" (1'13")
4) 4'59"-6'39" (1'40")
5) 6'39"-8'51" (1'12")

6) 8'51"-9'41" (50")
 7) 9'41"-10'21" (40")
 8) 10'21"-11'33" (1'12")
 9) 11'33"-11'40" (07")
 10) 11'40"-12'41" (1'01")
Total: 8'55" (535")/8 shots = 1'07" ASL (7 long takes)

Scene 4: Meeting The Writer and The Scientist (12'41"-21'18")

11) 12'41"-13'07" (26")
 12) 13'07"-15'23" (2'16")
 13) 15'23"-15'49" (26")
 14) 15'49"-20'31" (4'42")
 15) 20'31"-21'18" (47")
Total: 8'37" (517")/6 shots = 1'26" ASL (5 long takes)

Scene 5: Trespassing the Protected Barrier (21'18"-31'00")

16) 21'18"-22'14" (56")
 17) 22'14"-22'52" (38")
 18) 22'52"-23'21" (29")
 19) 23'21"-24'36" (1'15")
 20) 24'36"-25'44" (1'08")
 21) 25'44"-25'56" (12")
 22) 25'56"-26'05" (09")
 23) 26'05"-27'10" (1'05")
 24) 27'10"-27'19" (09")
 25) 27'19"-28'26" (1'07")
 26) 28'26"-28'46" (20")
 27) 28'46"-29'59" (1'13")
 28) 29'59"-30'21" (22")
 29) 30'21"-30'41" (20")
 30) 30'41"-30'48" (07")
 31) 30'48"-30'49" (01")
 32) 30'49"-30'53" (04")
 33) 30'53"-31'00" (07")
Total: 9'42" (582")/17 shots = 34.2" ASL (8 long takes)

Scene 6: Preparing the Flatcar (31'00"-34'31")

34) 31'00"-31'55" (55")
 35) 31'55"-32'33" (38")
 36) 32'33"-34'31" (1'58")
Total: 3'31" (211")/3 shots = 1'10" (3 long takes)

Scene 7: The Trolley Journey (34'31"-38'13")

37) 34'31"-35'10" (39")
 38) 35'10"-36'47" (1'37")
 39) 36'47"-36'55" (08")
 40) 36'55"-37'11" (16")
 41) 37'11"-38'13" (1'02")
Total: 3'42" (222")/5 shots = 44.4" ASL (3 long takes)

Scene 8: The Arrival Into the Zone (38'13"-49'36")

42) 38'13"-38'54" (41")
 43) 38'54"-43'15" (4'21")
 44) 43'15"-44'02" (47")
 45) 44'02"-44'31" (29")

46) 44'31"-45'03" (32")
 47) 45'03"-46'56" (1'53")
 48) 46'56"-47'51" (55")
 49) 47'51"-48'20" (29")
 50) 48'20"-49'36" (1'16")
Total: 11'23" (683")/9 shots =1'16" ASL (9 long takes)

Scene 9: Entering the Zone Proper (49'36"-57'18")

51) 49'36"-52'07" (2'31")
 52) 52'07"-53'44" (1'37")
 53) 53'44"-54'16" (32")
 54) 54'16"-55'21" (1'05")
 55) 55'21"-55'28" (07")
 56) 55'28"-57'09" (1'41")
 57) 57'09"-57'18" (09")
Total: 7'42" (462")/7 shots =1'06" (5 long takes)

Scene 10: The Warning (57'18"-65'14")

58) 57'18"-58'53" (1'35")
 59) 58'53"-59'24" (31")
 60) 59'24"-59'54" (30")
 61) 59'54"-60'07" (13")
 62) 60'07"-60'24" (17")
 63) 60'24"-60'28" (04")
 64) 60'28"-65'03" (4'35")
 65) 65'03"-65'14" (11")
Total: 7'56" (476")/8 shots = 59.5" ASL (4 long takes)

Scene 11: The "Dry" Tunnel (65'14"-73'09")

66) 65'14"-65'44" (30")
 67) 65'44"-66'36" (52")
 68) 66'36"-69'36" (3'00")
 69) 69'36"-69'46" (10")
 70) 69'46"-69'49" (03")
 71) 69'49"-72'31" (2'42")
 72) 72'31"-73'09" (37")
Total: 7'55" (475")/7 shots =1'08" ASL (5 long takes)

Scene 12: Resting Near the Tiled Room (73'09"-82'55")

73) 73'09"-75'37" (2'28")
 74) 75'37"-76'01" (24")
 75) 76'01"-76'17" (16")
 76) 76'17"-76'31" (14")
 77) 76'31"-76'57" (26")
 78) 76'57"-77'08" (11")
 79) 77'08"-77'17" (09")
 80) 77'17"-77'52" (35")
 81) 77'52"-79'04" (1'12")
 82) 79'04"-79'22" (18")
 83) 79'22"-79'49" (27")
 84) 79'49"-82'18" (2'29")
 85) 82'18"-82'55" (37")
Total: 9'46" (586")/13 shots =45" ASL (7 long takes)

Scene 13: The Stalker's Apocalyptic Dream (82'55"-91'00")

86) 82'55"-83'27" (32")
87) 83'27"-83'54" (27")
88) 83'54"-87'20" (3'26")
89) 87'20"-87'31" (11")
90) 87'31"-88'12" (41")
91) 88'12"-88'58" (46")
92) 88'58"-89'13" (15")
93) 89'13"-90'07" (54")
94) 90'07"-91'00" (53")
Total: 8'05" (485")/9 shots = 54" ASL (7 long takes)

Scene 14: The Meatgrinder (91'00"-104'52")

95) 91'00"-91'39" (39")
96) 91'39"-94'49" (3'10")
97) 94'49"-96'59" (2'10")
98) 96'59"-97'44" (45")
99) 97'44"-97'56" (12")
100) 97'56"-98'03" (07")
101) 98'03"-99'06" (1'03")
102) 99'06"-100'15" (1'09")
103) 100'15"-100'30" (15")
104) 100'30"-101'02" (32")
105) 101'02"-101'23" (21")
106) 101'23"-103'23" (2'00")
107) 103'23"-103'26" (03")
108) 103'26"-103'45" (19")
109) 103'45"-103'54" (09")
110) 103'54"-104'00" (06")
111) 104'00"-104'10" (10")
112) 104'10"-104'11" (01")
113) 104'11"-104'23" (12")
114) 104'23"-104'52" (29")
Total: 13'52" (832")/20 shots = 41.6" ASL (9 long takes)

Scene 15: At the Well (104'52"-113'05")

115) 104'52"-109'27" (4'35")
116) 109'27"-110'45" (1'18")
117) 110'45"-113'05" (2'20")
Total: 8'13" (493")/3 shots = 2'44" (3 long takes)

Scene 16: The Telephone Room (113'05"-121'24")

118) 113'05"-113'18" (13")
119) 113'18"-120'26" (7'08")
120) 120'26"-120'33" (07")
121) 120'33"-121'24" (51")
Total: 8'19" (499")/4 shots = 2'05" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 17: Struggling at the Room's Threshold (121'24"-138'06")

122) 121'24"-123'03" (1'39")
123) 123'03"-125'43" (2'40")
124) 125'43"-127'54" (2'11")
125) 127'54"-129'39" (1'45")
126) 129'39"-132'22" (2'43")

127) 132'22"-133'48" (1'26")
128) 133'48"-134'06" (18")
129) 134'06"-138'06" (4'00")
Total: 16'42" (1002")/8 shots = 2'05" ASL (7 long takes)

Scene 18: Looking into the Room (138'06"-143'32")

130") 138'06"-142'54" (4'48")
131) 142'54"-143'32" (38")
Total: 5'26" (326")/2 shots = 2'43" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 19: Back at the Bar (143'32"-148'29")

132) 143'32"-143'55" (23")
133) 143'55"-145'10" (1'15")
134) 145'10"-145'24" (14")
135) 145'24"-145'28" (04")
136) 145'28"-145'45" (17")
137) 145'45"-146'19" (34")
138) 146'19"-146'47" (28")
139) 146'47"-148'29" (1'42")
Total: 4'57" (297")/8 shots = 37" ASL (4 long takes)

Scene 20: Consoling the Stalker (148'29"-153'34")

140) 148'29"-150'50" (2'21")
141) 150'50"-153'34" (2'44")
Total: 5'05" (305")/2 shots = 2'32.5" ASL (2 long takes)

Scene 21: The Wife's Monologue (153'34"-156'30")

142) 153'34"-156'30" (2'56")
Total: 2'56" (176")/1 shot = 2'56" ASL (1 long take)

Scene 22: Monkey's Miracle? (156'30"-160'50")

143) 156'30"-160'50" (4'20")
Total: 4'20" (260")/ 1 shot = 4'20" ASL (1 long take)

Total Length: 160'50" (9650")/143 shots = 1'07"

Appendix 2

Comparative Statistical Breakdown of Case Study Films & Extra Sampled Films

Long Take & Scene Construction: Case Study Films:

- The Magnificent Ambersons* (Dialectical Long Take Practice)
- Ugetsu* (Synthetic Long Take Practice)
- Stalker* (Radical Long Take Practice)

Long Take & Scene Construction: Extra Sampled Films:

Dialectical Long Take Practice

- Vivre Sa Vie* (1963, Jean-Luc Godard, France)
- Unbreakable* (2000, M. Night Shyamalan, US)
- A Moment Of Innocence* (1996, Mohsen Makhmalbaf, Iran)
- La Ronde* (1950, Max Ophuls, France)
- The Cranes are Flying* (1957, Mikhail Kalatozov, USSR)

Synthetic Long Take Practice

- Christmas in August* (1998, Hur Jin-Ho, Republic of Korea)
- Slacker* (1991, Richard Linklater, US)
- Mighty Aphrodite* (1995, Woody Allen, US)
- Maborosi* (1995, Kore-eda Hirokazu, Japan)
- Vive L'Amour* (1994, Tsai Ming-liang, Taiwan)

Radical Long Take Practice

- Ulysses' Gaze* (1995, Theo Angelopoulos, Greece)
- Mother and Son* (1997, Alexander Sokurov, Russia)
- The Second Circle* (1990, Alexander Sokurov, Russia)
- The Hole* (2000, Tsai Ming-liang, Taiwan)
- Spring in my Hometown* (1997, Lee Kwangmo, Republic of Korea)

The Magnificent Ambersons (Dialectical Long Take Practice)

Total Number of Shots: 284
Total Number of Scenes: 37
ASL: 18"

Long Take Breakdown:

- Total Number of Long Takes: 50 (18% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 15 (5% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 12 (4% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 23 (8% of total shots)
-
- Long takes between 25"-40": 30% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes between 41"-59": 24% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes 1'00" and longer: 47% (of total long takes)
-
- Number of shots under 10": 187 (66%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

- Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 31 (62% of long takes)
- Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 29 (78% of total scenes)
- Long takes that open a scene: 19 (51% of total scenes)
 - Long takes that close a scene: 25 (68% of total scenes)
 - Sequence shots scenes: 12 (32% of total scenes)
 - Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 84% (31/37)
 - Average number of long takes per scene: 1.3

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:

25", 25", 26", 27", 29", 29", 30", 32", 33", 34", 34", 35", 39", 40", 42", 42", 45", 46", 48", 48", 49", 51", 52", 52", 55", 58", 58", 1'02", 1'03", 1'06", 1'16", 1'24", 1'24", 1'27", 1'32", 1'37", 1'37", 1'38", 1'43", 1'43", 1'46", 1'52", 1'53", 2'02", 2'10", 2'16", 2'54", 2'54", 3'00", 4'25"

Aggregate screen-time: 61'48" (71% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 43'45" (2625" /200 shots) = ASL 13
0'15"-44'00" (Scenes 1-14)
ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 42'19" (2539" /84 shots) = ASL 30
44'00"-86'19" (Scenes 15-37)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 86'04"
87'40" minus screen credit time (1'36")

The Magnificent Ambersons
Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (20)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
4.	31"	21	9	10'48"
9.	2'25"	2	1	4'30"
10.	1'45"	1	1	1'45"
12.	1'12.50"	2	1	2'25"
13.	48"	1	1	48"

Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
15.	2'54"	1	1	2'54"
16.	1'16"	1	1	1'16"
19.	40.5"	4	2	2'42"
20.	51"	3	3	2'34"
22.	52.5"	4	1	3'30"
23.	1'12.50"	2	1	2'25"
26.	1'52"	1	1	1'52"
27.	27"	1	1	27"
28.	1'46"	1	1	1'46"
29.	1'53"	1	1	1'53"
30.	2'54"	1	1	2'54"
31.	44.4"	5	3	3'42"
32.	1'37"	1	1	1'37"
34.	1'06"	1	1	1'06"
37.	1'37"	1	1	1'37"

Total Time: 52'30" (61% of total screen time)

<u>Scenes Dominated by Editing (13)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
1.	10.6"	11	1	1'57"
2.	8.6"	23	1	3'20"
3.	6.0"	33	1	3'19"
6.	16.5"	13	2	3'35"
7.	4.7"	60	0	4'45"
11.	11.6"	3	0	35"
14.	10"	24	3	4'02"
17.	5.8"	8	0	47"
18.	7.6"	13	2	1'39"
21.	10.3"	14	2	2'25"
24.	12"	3	0	36"
33.	5"	9	0	45"
35.	17"	1	0	17"

Total Time: 28'03" (33% of total screen time)

<u>Scenes with a Mixed Mode (4)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
5.	20.5"	2	1	41"
8.	19"	4	2	1'15"
25.	32.8"	4	1	2'11"
36.	21"	4	1	1'24"

Total Time: 5'31" (6% of total screen time)

***Ugetsu* (Synthetic Long Take Practice)**

Total Number of Shots: 193

Total Number of Scenes: 30

ASL: 29"

Long Take Breakdown:

Total Number of Long Takes: 83 (43% of total shots)

- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 41 (21.2% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 22 (11.4% of total shots)
- Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 20 (10.4% of total shots)

- Long takes between 25"-40": 49.4% (of total long takes)
- Long takes between 41"-59": 26.5% (of total long takes)
- Long takes 1'00" and longer: 24.1% (of total long takes)

- Number of shots under 10": 32 (16.5%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

- Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 38 (46% of long takes)
- Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 27 (90% of total scenes)
- Long takes that open a scene: 18 (60% of total scenes)
 - Long takes that close a scene: 22 (73.3% of total scenes)
 - Sequence shot scenes: 2 (7% of total scenes)
 - Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 97% (29/30)
 - Average number of long takes per scene: 2.8

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:

25", 25", 26", 26", 27", 27", 28", 28", 28", 29", 30", 31", 31", 31", 32", 32", 33", 33", 33", 33", 33", 33", 34", 35", 35", 35", 36", 36", 36", 37", 37", 37", 38", 38", 38", 39", 39", 40", 40", 40", 40", 41", 42", 43", 44", 44", 46", 48", 49", 50", 50", 51", 51", 52", 52", 52", 53", 54", 55", 57", 58", 58", 59", 1'00", 1'01", 1'04", 1'04", 1'08", 1'09", 1'10", 1'15", 1'22", 1'24", 1'25", 1'25", 1'27", 1'37", 1'42", 1'44", 1'45", 1'51", 1'59", 1'59"

Aggregate Screen-Time of Long Takes: 69'44" (74% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 49'37" (2977"/121 shots) = ASL 24.6"

2'14"-51'51" (Scenes 1-14)

ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 44'27" (2667"/72 shots) = ASL 37"

51'51"-96'18" (Scenes 15-30)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 94'04"

96'18" minus screen credit time (2'14")

Ugetsu

Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

Scene#	<i>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (18)</i>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
1.	32"	4	3	2'07"
3.	32"	3	2	1'35"
5.	1'23.5"	2	2	2'47"
8.	30.5"	11	6	5'36"
9.	29"	11	5	5'17"
12.	24"	8	4	3'09"
14.	33"	24	11	13'13"
15.	44"	3	2	2'12"
16.	27"	3	2	1'20"
17.	27"	3	2	1'20"

Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
19.	1'42"	1	1	1'42"
22.	42"	9	6	6'21"
24.	1'11"	2	2	2'22"
26.	42"	4	3	2'46"
27.	1'29"	5	5	7'25"
28.	50"	3	2	2'29"
29.	40"	1	1	40"
30.	36"	6	4	3'35"
Total Time: 65'56" (70% of screen-time)				

<u>Scenes Dominated by Editing (6)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
2.	19"	1	0	19"
6.	21"	6	1	2'05"
7.	15"	17	3	4'14"
10.	15"	6	1	1'32"
13.	12"	14	2	2'44"
21.	19"	3	1	56"
Total Time: 11'50" (13% of screen-time)				

<u>Scenes with a Mixed Mode (6)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
4.	25"	3	1	1'14"
11.	20"	11	3	3'45"
18.	27"	4	1	1'49"
20.	29"	4	1	1'57"
23.	26.5"	2	1	53"
25.	21"	19	5	6'40"
Total Time: 16'18" (17% of screen-time)				

***Stalker* (Radical Long Tale Practice)**

Total Number of Shots: 143
Total Number of Scenes: 22
ASL: 1'07"

Long Take Breakdown:

Total Number of Long Takes: 96 (67%)

- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 28 (19.6% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 14 (9.8% of total shots)
- Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 54 (38% of total shots)

- Long takes between 25"-40": 29.5% (of total long takes)
- Long takes between 41"-59": 14.7% (of total long takes)
- Long takes 1'00" and longer: 56.25% (of total long takes)

- Number of shots under 10": 20 (14%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

- Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 35 (37% of long takes)
Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 22 (100% of total scenes)
-Long takes that open a scene: 20 (91% of total scenes)
-Long takes that close a scene: 17 (77% of total scenes)
-Sequence shots scenes: 4 (18% of total scenes)
-Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 100% (22/22)
-Average number of long takes per scene: 4.3

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:

26", 26", 26", 27", 27", 28", 29", 29", 29", 29", 30", 30", 31", 32", 32", 32", 32", 34", 35", 35",
37", 37", 38", 38", 38", 39", 39", 40", 41", 41", 45", 46", 47", 47", 50", 51", 52", 53", 54", 55",
55", 56", 1'01", 1'02", 1'03", 1'05", 1'05", 1'07", 1'08", 1'09", 1'12", 1'12", 1'12", 1'13", 1'13",
1'15", 1'15", 1'16", 1'18", 1'26", 1'35", 1'37", 1'37", 1'39", 1'40", 1'41", 1'42", 1'45", 1'53",
1'58", 2'00", 2'10", 2'11", 2'16", 2'20", 2'21", 2'28", 2'29", 2'31", 2'40", 2'42", 2'43", 2'44",
2'56", 3'00", 3'10", 3'11", 3'26", 4'00", 4'20", 4'21", 4'35", 4'35", 4'42", 4'48", 7'08"

Aggregate long take screen-time: 151'52" (94% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 82'55" (4975"/85 shots) = ASL 58.5"
0'00"-82'55" (Scenes 1-12)
ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 77'55" (4675"/58 shots) = ASL 1'21"
44.00-86.04 (Scenes 13-22)
Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 160'50"

Stalker

Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

<i>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (22)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
1.	3'11"	1	1	3'11"
2.	35"	1	1	35"
3.	1'07"	8	7	8'55"
4.	1'26"	6	5	8'37"
5.	34.2"	17	8	9'42"
6.	1'10"	3	3	3'31"
7.	44.4"	5	3	3'42"
8.	1'16"	9	9	11'23"
9.	1'06"	7	5	7'42"
10.	59.5"	8	4	7'56"
11.	1'08"	7	5	7'55"
12.	45"	13	7	9'46"
13.	54"	9	7	8'05"
14.	41.6"	20	9	13'52"
15.	2'44"	3	3	8'13"
16.	2'05"	4	2	8'19"
17.	2'05"	8	7	16'42"
18.	2'43"	2	2	5'26"
19.	37"	8	4	4'57"
20.	2'32.5"	2	2	5'05"
21.	2'56"	1	1	2'56"
22.	4'20"	1	1	4'20"

Total Time: 160'50" (100% of screen-time)

<i>Scenes Dominated by Editing (0)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
<i>Scenes With a Mixed Mode (0)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length

Dialectical Long Take Practice Extra Sampled Films

Vivre sa vie

Total Number of Shots: 188
Total Number of Scenes: 18
ASL: 26"

Long Take Breakdown:

- Total Number of Long Takes: 59 (31% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 26 (13.8% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 7 (3.7% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 26 (13.8.% of total shots)
-
- Long takes between 25"-40": 44% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes between 41"-59": 11.8% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes 1'00" and longer: 44% (of total long takes)
-
- Number of shots under 10": 90 (48%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

- Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 16 (30% of long takes)
Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 10 (67% of total scenes)
- Long takes that open a scene: 8 (53.3% of total scenes)
 - Long takes that close a scene: 8 (53.3% of total scenes)
 - Sequence shot scenes: 0 (0% of total scenes)
 - Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 88.8% (16/18)
 - Average number of long takes per scene: 3.3

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:

25", 25", 26", 26", 26", 27", 27", 27", 27", 27", 28", 28", 28", 29", 30", 31", 31", 32", 34", 35",
35", 36", 36", 37", 39", 39", 41", 43", 45", 49", 51", 57", 59", 1'00", 1'00", 1'04", 1'04", 1'06",
1'09", 1'11", 1'15", 1'15", 1'17", 1'18", 1'19", 1'24", 1'25", 1'31", 1'32", 1'36", 1'36", 1'50",
2'15", 2'26", 2'39", 2'52", 3'12", 3'16", 3'16"

Aggregate Screen-Time of Long Takes: 63'44" (77% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 45'32" (2732"/76 shots) = ASL 36"
0'30"-46'02" (Scenes 1-11)
ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 36'57" (2217"/112 shots) = ASL 20"
46'02"-82'57" (Scenes 12-18)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 82'27"
82'57"minus screen credit time (30")

Vivre sa Vie

Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (10)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
1	46"	3	3	2'19"
2	49.5	8	7	6'36"
3	52"	4	1	3'31

Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
5	37"	1	1	37"
7	1'43"	2	1	3'26"
10	40"	13	7	8'40"
11	53.4"	10	5	8'54"
13	1'13"	6	4	7'17"
16	28"	22	10	10'17"
18	38"	6	2	3'49"

Total Time: 55'26" (67% of screen-time)

<i>Scenes Dominated by Editing (5)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of long takes	Scene Length
4	15	4	1	1'01"
9	16	18	5	4'45"
12	5.6	43	0	4'03"
14	20"	17	4	5'40"
15	6.8"	5	0	34"

Total Time: 16'03" (20% of screen-time)

<i>Scenes With a Mixed Mode (3)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of long takes	Scene Length
6	24	7	2	2'48"
8	29"	6	2	2'55"
17	24"	13	4	5'15"

Total Time: 10'58" (13% of screen-time)

Unbreakable

Total Number of Shots: 322

Total Number of Scenes: 26

ASL: 19"

Total Number of Long Takes: 66 (20% of total shots)

- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 32 (10% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 11 (3.4% of total shots)
- Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 23 (7.1% of total shots)
- Long takes between 25"-40": 48% (of total long takes)
- Long takes between 41"-59": 17% (of total long takes)
- Long takes 1'00" and longer: 35% (of total long takes)
- Number of shots under 10": 190 (59%)

Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 23 (35% of long takes)

Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 19 (73% of total scenes)

- Long takes that open a scene: 10 (38% of total scenes)
- Long takes that close a scene: 14 (54% of total scenes)
- Sequence shot scenes: 1 (4% of total scenes)
- Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 88% (23/26)
- Average number of long takes per scene: 2.5

Long Takes in Numerical Order:

25", 25", 26", 26", 30", 30", 30", 30", 31", 31", 31", 31", 32", 32", 32", 32", 33", 33", 34", 34", 34", 35", 35", 36", 36", 36", 36", 36", 37", 37", 38", 38", 41", 45", 45", 47", 48", 46", 53", 54", 55", 56", 57", 59", 1'01", 1'01", 1'02", 1'02", 1'03", 1'04", 1'12", 1'36", 1'42", 1'49", 1'50", 1'51", 1'51", 1'53", 1'57", 2'05", 2'06", 2'08", 2'08", 2'12", 2'20", 2'53", 3'49"

Aggregate Screen-Time of Long Takes: 68'19" (68% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 53'03" (3202"/167 shots) = ASL 19.2"
0'00"-54'50" (- 1'27" credits) (Scenes 1-15)

ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 47'20" (2840"/155 shots) = ASL 18.3"
54'50"-102'10" (Scenes 16-25)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 100'43"
102'10"- minus screen credit time (1'27")

Unbreakable

Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (10)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
1	2'08"	1	1	2'08"
4	1'58"	2	2	3'56"
7	1'04"	2	1	2'08"
10	39"	8	6	5'06"
16	25"	5	3	2'05"
17	36"	5	2	3'01"
18	43"	4	1	2'52"
19	52"	2	2	1'44"
21	44"	8	3	5'50"
22	1'01"	4	3	4'05"

Total Time: 32'58" (33% of total screen-time)

<u>Scenes Dominated by Editing (9)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
3	6.8"	10	0	1'08"
5	6.9"	10	0	1'09"
6	19"	12	3	3'53"
11	22"	11	2	4'01"
13	4"	33	0	2'26"
14	12"	31	5	6'26"
24	9"	53	6	7'59"
25	18"	15	2	4'28"
26	14"	26	2	6'23"

Total Time: 37'53" (38% of total screen time)

<u>Scenes with a Mixed Mode (7)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
2	34"	9	2	5'08"
8	27"	9	2	4'07"
9	19"	7	2	2'12"
12	24"	11	3	4'28"
15	28"	11	1	5'04"
20	20"	9	3	3'03"
23	15"	24	7	5'50"

Total Time: 29'52" (29% of total screen time)

Moment of Innocence

Total Number of Shots: 213
Total Number of Scenes: 15
ASL: 21"

Long Take Breakdown:

- Total Number of Long Takes: 54 (25% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 24 (11.3% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 12 (5.6% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 18 (8.5% of total shots)
-
- Long takes between 25"-40": 44.4% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes between 41"-59": 22.2% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes 1'00" and longer: 33.3% (of total long takes)
-
- Number of shots under 10": 109 (51%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

- Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 16 (30% of long takes)
- Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 10 (67% of total scenes)
- Long takes that open a scene: 8 (53.3% of total scenes)
 - Long takes that close a scene: 8 (53.3% of total scenes)
 - Sequence shot scenes: 0 (0% of total scenes)
 - Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 93% (14/15)
 - Average number of long takes per scene: 3.6

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:

25", 25", 26", 26", 27", 27", 27", 27", 28", 29", 29", 29", 30", 31", 31", 32", 32", 32", 36", 37", 38", 38", 38", 39", 43", 45", 47", 48", 48", 50", 51", 53", 53", 55", 58", 58", 1'00", 1'05", 1'06", 1'08", 1'10", 1'11", 1'12", 1'17", 1'32", 1'38", 1'38", 1'47", 1'50", 1'52", 2'03", 2'04", 3'09", 3'32",

Aggregate Screen-Time of Long Takes: 49'58" (67% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 42'26" (2546"/135 shots) = ASL 19"
0'00"-42'26" (Scenes 1-9)
ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 32'06" (1926"/79 shots) = ASL 24"
42'26"-74'32" (Scenes 10-15)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 74'32"

Moment of Innocence

Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (5)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
8.	1'12.50"	2	2	2'25"
9.	47"	14	8	10'56"
10.	43"	7	5	5'02"
12.	1'07"	7	6	7'49"
14.	28"	3	2	1'23"

Total Time: 27'35" (37% of total screen-time)

<u>Scenes Dominated by Editing (7)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
1.	04"	23	0	1'39"
2.	12"	22	3	4'16"
3.	15"	8	2	1'57"
4.	17"	33	4	9'30"
7.	24"	8	1	3'10"
13.	19"	10	3	3'12"
15.	16"	30	4	7'52"

Total Time: 31'36" (42% of total screen time)

<u>Scene with a Mixed Mode (3)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
5.	21"	21	5	4'28"
6.	20"	12	3	4'05"
11.	20"	20	6	6'48"

Total Time: 15'21" (21% of total screen time)

La Ronde

Total Number of Shots: 293
 Total Number of Scenes: 19
 ASL: 18"

Long Take Breakdown:

- Total Number of Long Takes: 58 (20% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 20 (7% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 19 (6% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 19 (6% of total shots)
-
- Long takes between 25"-40": 34% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes between 41"-59": 33% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes 1'00" and longer: 33% (of total long takes)
-
- Number of shots under 10": 163 (56%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 21 (36% of long takes)

- Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 14 (74% of total scenes)
- Long takes that open a scene: 10 (53% of total scenes)
 - Long takes that close a scene: 12 (63% of total scenes)
 - Sequence shots scenes: 0 (0% of total scenes)
 - Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 95% (18/19)
 - Average number of long takes per scene: 3

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:

25", 27", 28", 29", 29", 29", 29", 31", 31", 34", 34", 36", 36", 36", 36", 37", 37", 39", 40", 40", 41", 42", 42", 42", 42", 44", 44", 45", 46", 46", 47", 48", 51", 52", 52", 53", 55", 56", 56", 1'00", 1'02", 1'02", 1'02", 1'04", 1'05", 1'05", 1'11", 1'15", 1'16", 1'18", 1'24", 1'30", 1'34", 1'35", 1'49", 1'54", 2'18", 5'05"

Aggregate screen-time: 55'36" (62% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 44'52" (2692"/133 shots) = ASL 20
 0.15-44.00 (Scenes 1-11)
 ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 45'11" (2711"/160 shots) = ASL 17
 44.00-86.04 (Scenes 12-19)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 90'03"
 92'00" minus screen credit time (1'57")

La Ronde
 Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (7)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
1	5'05"	1	1	5'05"
2	1'28.5"	2	2	2'57"
4	1'01"	5	4	5'04"
5	1'00"	3	2	3'00"
8	38"	2	1	1'16"
13	59"	6	5	5'53"
14	43"	5	3	3'35"
Total Time: 26'50" (30% of total screen-time)				

<u>Scenes Dominated by Editing (9)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
6	8.8"	46	2	6'45"
7	5.25"	17	0	1'24"
9	15.25"	8	1	2'02"
11	20"	18	4	5'51"
12	17.5"	32	5	9'20"
15	15.3"	21	4	5'23"
16	11"	17	1	3'08"
17	11"	21	2	3'49"
18	12.7"	31	5	6'34"
Total Time: 44'16" (49% of total screen time)				

<u>Scenes with a Mixed Mode (3)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
3	19"	7	2	2'13"
10	23"	24	8	9'15"
19	17"	27	6	7'29"
Total Time: 18'57" (21% of total screen time)				

The Cranes Are Flying

Total Number of Shots: 316
 Total Number of Scenes: 26
 ASL: 18"

Long Take Breakdown:

- Total Number of Long Takes: 66 (21% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 30 (9.5% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 16 (5% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 20 (6.3% of total shots)
 - Long takes between 25"-40": 45.5% (of total long takes)

- Long takes between 41"-59": 24.2% (of total long takes)
- Long takes 1'00" and longer: 30.3% (of total long takes)
- Number of shots under 10": 153 (48%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 24 (36% of long takes)

Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 18 (69% of total scenes)

- Long takes that open a scene: 12 (46% of total scenes)
- Long takes that close a scene: 12 (46% of total scenes)
- Sequence shots scenes: 2 (7.7% of total scenes)
- Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 81% (21/26)
- Average number of long takes per scene: 2.5

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:

25", 25", 26", 26", 26", 26", 27", 27", 27", 27", 28", 28", 28", 29", 29", 29", 32", 32", 33", 34", 35", 36", 36", 37", 38", 38", 39", 39", 40", 40", 41", 42", 43", 44", 47", 47", 47", 48", 48", 50", 50", 53", 53", 53", 54", 56", 1'01", 1'01", 1'03", 1'10", 1'14", 1'19", 1'21", 1'22", 1'24", 1'25", 1'27", 1'31", 1'32", 1'34", 1'34", 1'35", 1'36", 1'37", 1'59", 2'00"

Aggregate screen-time: 57'23" (62% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 45'13" (2713" /160 shots) = ASL 17
0'00"-46'52" –credits 1'39" (Scenes 1-16)

ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 47'32" (2852" /156 shots) = ASL 18
46'52"-94'24" (Scenes 17-26)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 92'45"
94'24" minus screen credit time (1'39")

The Cranes Are Flying

Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (10)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
2.	30"	9	5	4'31"
4.	37"	3	1	1'52"
7.	30"	16	6	7'52"
8.	28.5"	4	2	1'54"
10.	25.5"	4	2	1'42"
13.	41"	1	1	41"
15.	40"	4	2	2'40"
18.	1'21"	1	1	1'21"
19.	37"	11	8	6'50"
24.	30"	8	4	4'02"

Total Time: 33'25" (36% of screen-time)

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by Editing (11)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
1.	11"	8	0	1'30"
3.	13"	13	0	1'23"
9.	13"	21	2	4'32"
11.	11"	14	0	2'41"
12.	16.5"	4	0	1'06"

Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
14.	8.5"	33	2	4'42"
16.	9"	5	0	46"
17.	16"	22	3	5'48"
20.	13"	30	4	6'39"
21.	4"	29	1	2'09"
23.	20"	14	3	4'41"

Total Time: 35'57" (39% of screen-time)

<u>Scenes with a Mixed Mode (5)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
5.	25"	3	1	1'15"
6.	22"	17	5	6'06"
22.	27"	11	4	4'27"
25.	29"	9	2	4'23"
26.	20.5"	21	7	7'12"

Total Time: 23'23"(25% of screen-time)

Synthetic Long Take Practice Extra Sampled Films

Christmas in August

Total Number of Shots: 215
Total Number of Scenes: 38
ASL: 26"

Long Take Breakdown:

- Total Number of Long Takes: 83 (39% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 38 (18% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 29 (13% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 16 (7.4% of total shots)
-
- Long takes between 25"-40": 46% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes between 41"-59": 35% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes 1'00" and longer: 19% (of total long takes)
-
- Number of shots under 10": 42 (19.5%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

- Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 39 (47% of long takes)
Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 30 (79% of total scenes)
- Long takes that open a scene: 17 (45% of total scenes)
 - Long takes that close a scene: 22 (58% of total scenes)
 - Sequence shot scenes: 2 (5% of total scenes)
 - Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 92% (35/38)
 - Average number of long takes per scene: 2.2

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:

25", 25", 25", 26", 27", 27", 27", 27", 27", 29", 28", 28", 29", 30", 30", 31", 32", 32", 33", 33", 33", 33", 34", 34", 34", 34", 35", 35", 35", 38", 39", 39", 39", 39", 39", 39", 39", 39", 41", 41", 41", 42", 42", 42", 43", 43", 43", 44", 45", 45", 45", 45", 46", 46", 46", 48", 48", 48", 49", 50", 51", 52", 53", 54", 56", 56", 57", 1'01", 1'02", 1'05", 1'08", 1'11", 1'11", 1'12", 1'23", 1'23", 1'27", 1'28", 1'34", 1'34", 1'50", 1'54", 2'21"

Aggregate Screen-Time of Long Takes: 65'53" (70% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 46'49" (2809"/108 shots) = ASL 26"
0'00"-47'17" – credits 28" (Scenes 1-22)
ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 47'09" (2829"/107 shots) = ASL 26"
47'17"-94'26" (Scenes 23-38)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 93'58"
96'20" minus screen credit time (2'22")

Christmas in August

Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (20)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
7.	37"	2	1	1'14"
9.	39"	4	2	2'37"
11.	43"	2	2	1'26"

Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
12.	37"	4	2	2'28"
13.	48"	1	1	48"
15.	36"	3	2	1'48"
17.	46"	8	6	6'09"
19.	27"	2	1	54"
21.	35"	3	2	1'44"
22.	24"	8	4	3'10"
23.	33"	5	3	2'47"
24.	47"	3	2	2'22"
25.	30"	3	2	1'30"
26.	38"	7	3	4'27"
29.	29"	10	4	4'48"
31.	33"	6	4	3'16"
32.	28"	1	1	28"
34.	26"	7	4	3'00"
35.	34"	5	3	2'48"
37.	28"	10	5	4'42"

Total Time: 52'26" (56% of screen-time)

<u>Scenes Dominated by Editing (7)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
4.	21.5"	2	0	43"
5.	17.5"	2	0	35"
6.	18"	5	1	1'29"
14.	21"	5	1	1'46"
18.	16"	13	1	3'32"
27.	8"	4	0	32"
33.	16"	12	2	3'12"

Total Time: 11'49" (12.5% of screen-time)

<u>Scenes with a Mixed Mode (11)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
1.	23"	7	2	2'41"
2.	21"	8	3	2'45"
3.	23"	9	2	3'27"
8.	26.5	4	1	1'46"
10.	17"	6	2	1'42"
16.	22"	7	3	2'31"
20.	31"	3	1	1'34"
28.	21"	8	2	2'47"
30.	21"	4	1	1'23"
36.	22.5"	9	3	3'23"
38.	26"	13	4	5'44"

Total Time: 29'43" (31.5% of screen-time)

Slacker

Total Number of Shots: 177

Total Number of Scenes: 25

ASL: 33"

Long Take Breakdown:

Total Number of Long Takes: 64 (36% of total shots)

- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 21 (12% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 16 (9% of total shots)
- Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 27 (15% of total shots)
- Long takes between 25"-40": 33% (of total long takes)
- Long takes between 41"-59": 25% (of total long takes)
- Long takes 1'00" and longer: 42% (of total long takes)
- Number of shots under 10": 77 (44%)

Aggregate screen-time: 79'35" (82% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 44'20" (2660"/62 shots) = ASL 43"
 0'00"-44'20" (Scenes 1-11)
 ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 52'35" (3155"/115 shots) = ASL 27"
 44'20"-96'55" (Scenes 12-25)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 96'55"

Slacker
Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

Scene#	<i>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (16)</i>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
1	1'22"	5	5	6'51"
2	1'10"	4	4	4'39"
3	38"	3	2	1'54"
4	59"	6	5	5'53"
6	2'38"	3	3	7'56"
8	1'16"	2	1	2'33"
11	1'00"	3	3	2'59"
12	3'33"	2	2	7'07"
13	41"	2	2	1'22"
15	1'31"	6	6	9'07"
16	29"	10	5	4'52"
17	1'53"	2	2	3'47"
19	1'12"	4	2	4'48"
21	2'34"	1	1	2'34"
22	50"	2	2	1'40"
23	1'15"	1	1	1'15"

Total Time: 69'17" (71% of total screen time)

Scene#	<i>Scenes Dominated by Editing (5)</i>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
7	17"	10	2	2'49"
9	18"	4	1	1'15"
10	15"	10	1	2'32"
24	16"	4	0	1'05"
25	3"	51	0	2'31"

Total Time: 10'12" (11% of total screen time)

Scene#	<i>Scenes with a Mixed Mode (4)</i>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
5	25"	12	3	4'59"
14	23"	11	5	4'19"

Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
18	25"	12	3	4'59"
20	27"	7	3	3'09"

Total Time: 17'26" (18% of total screen time)

Mighty Aphrodite

Total Number of Shots: 157
 Total Number of Scenes: 29
 ASL: 35"

Total Number of Long Takes: 62 (39% of total shots)

- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 17 (11% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 25 (10% of total shots)
- Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 30 (19% of total shots)
- Long takes between 25"-40": 27.4% (of total long takes)
- Long takes between 41"-59": 24.2% (of total long takes)
- Long takes 1'00" and longer: 48.4% (of total long takes)
- Number of shots under 10": 56 (36%)

Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 38 (39% of long takes)

- Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 28 (97% of total scenes)
- Long takes that open a scene: 21 (72% of total scenes)
 - Long takes that close a scene: 23 (79% of total scenes)
 - Sequence shot scenes: 8 (28% of total scenes)
 - Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 97% (28/29)
 - Average number of long takes per scene: 3.2

Long Takes in Numerical Order:

25", 25", 26", 26", 26", 26", 28", 30", 30", 30", 31", 31", 33", 33", 34", 35", 38", 41", 42", 44", 44", 45", 46", 48", 50", 50", 50", 55", 55", 56", 56", 58", 1'00", 1'00", 1'01", 1'03", 1'08", 1'09", 1'14", 1'18", 1'22", 1'25", 1'25", 1'28", 1'34", 1'36", 1'38", 1'39", 1'40", 1'40", 2'02", 2'02", 2'03", 2'03", 2'23", 2'28", 2'35", 2'41", 3'01", 3'04", 3'06", 3'34"

Aggregate Screen-Time of Long Takes: 76'09" (84% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 45'41" (2741"/82 shots) = ASL 33"
 1'14"-46'55" (Scenes 1-15)

ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 44'48" (2688"/75 shots) = ASL 36"
 46'55"-91'43" (Scenes 16-29)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 90'29"
 91'43" minus screen credit time (1'14")

Mighty Aphrodite
Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (19)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
2	2'28"	1	1	2'28"
3	1'25"	1	1	1'25"
6	48"	2	2	1'36"
8	33'	1	1	33"
9	51"	7	5	6'00"
11	2'03"	1	1	2'03"
12	38.5"	12	6	7'42"
13	41"	1	1	41"
14	1'39"	3	3	4'57"
17	1'32"	2	2	4'24"
19	1'14"	3	2	3'43"
20	35"	2	2	1'10"
21	1'40"	1	1	1'40"
22	1'05"	7	3	7'04"
23	26"	1	1	26"
24	58"	7	2	6'47"
25	1'03"	2	2	2'06"
26	37'	3	1	1'14"
27	33"	3	2	1'38"

Total Time: 57'37" (64% of total screen-time)

<u>Scenes Dominated by Editing (4)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
1	8"	10	0	1'20"
4	21"	10	1	3'29"
28	20"	13	2	4'20"
29	17"	19	4	5'19"

Total Time: 14'28" (16% of total screen time)

<u>Scenes with a Mixed Mode (6)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
5	26"	6	2	2'35"
6	20"	11	4	3'36"
10	23"	7	3	2'44"
15	30"	9	3	4'32"
16	34"	3	1	1'41"
18	22"	9	3	3'16"

Total Time: 18'24" (20% of total screen time)

Maborosi

Total Number of Shots: 255
Total Number of Scenes: 36
ASL: 25"

Long Take Breakdown:

Total Number of Long Takes: 87 (34% of total shots)

- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 53 (21% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 17 (7% of total shots)
- Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 17 (7% of total shots)
- Long takes between 25"-40": 61% (of total long takes)
- Long takes between 41"-59": 19.5% (of total long takes)
- Long takes 1'00" and longer: 19.5% (of total long takes)
- Number of shots under 10": 36 (14%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

- Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 27 (31% of long takes)
- Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 20 (56% of total scenes)
 - Long takes that open a scene: 11 (31% of total scenes)
 - Long takes that close a scene: 16 (44% of total scenes)
 - Sequence shot scenes: 2 (5.5% of total scenes)
 - Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 89% (32/36)
 - Average number of long takes per scene: 2.4

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:

25", 25", 25", 25", 25", 25", 25", 25", 25", 25", 25", 25", 26", 26", 26", 26", 26", 26", 27", 27", 27", 28", 28", 28", 28", 29", 29", 30", 30", 30", 31", 31", 31", 33", 33", 33", 34", 34", 34", 34", 35", 35", 35", 35", 36", 36", 37", 37", 37", 38", 38", 39", 40", 41", 42", 42", 43", 43", 44", 46", 47", 51", 52", 54", 54", 56", 56", 56", 57", 59", 1'00", 1'01", 1'02", 1'04", 1'05", 1'06", 1'06", 1'07", 1'07", 1'12", 1'13", 1'20", 1'31", 2'22", 2'22", 3'09", 3'28"

Aggregate Screen-Time of Long Takes: 66'11" (62% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 54'15" (3255"/150 shots) = ASL 22"
 0'00"-54'26" – credits 11" (Scenes 1-24)
 ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 52'14" (3134"/105 shots) = ASL 30"
 54'26"-106'40" (Scenes 25-36)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 106'29"
 109'00" minus screen credit time (2'31")

Maborosi
 Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

Scene#	<i>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (16)</i>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
3.	1'13"	1	1	1'13"
5.	33"	2	1	1'05"
9.	59"	1	1	59"
13.	27'	6	3	2'44"
14.	56"	3	1	2'49"
17.	25"	14	6	5'50"
21.	31"	6	4	3'05"
24.	27"	10	7	4'29"
26.	30"	8	4	4'02"
28.	43.5"	2	1	1'27"
31.	39"	7	4	4'30"
32.	29"	11	7	5'22"
34.	47"	6	2	4'45"
35.	42"	10	6	7'04"

Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
36.	55"	6	3	5'31"
37.	39"	6	4	3'53"

Total Time: 58'48" (55% of screen-time)

<i>Scenes Dominated by Editing (10)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
2.	16"	9	2	2'25"
7.	10"	7	0	1'12"
8.	16"	5	1	1'22"
11.	12"	8	0	1'38"
15.	13"	4	0	54"
16.	12"	6	0	1'14"
20.	16"	11	1	3'01"
23.	16"	8	2	2'11"
25.	18"	6	1	1'48"
27.	17"	12	1	3'21"

Total Time: 19'06" (18% of screen-time)

<i>Scenes with a Mixed Mode (11)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
1.	25"	6	2	2'31"
4.	18"	10	3	3'03"
6.	30"	3	1	1'31"
10.	27"	3	1	1'20"
12.	24"	5	2	1'59"
18.	24"	7	3	2'51"
19.	20"	8	2	2'42"
22.	18"	7	2	2'07"
29.	20"	19	4	6'23"
30.	20"	7	2	2'23"
33.	21"	5	2	1'45"

Total Time: 28'35" (27% of screen-time)

Vive L'Amour

Total Number of Shots: 193
 Total Number of Scenes: 24
 ASL: 36"

Long Take Breakdown:

- Total Number of Long Takes: 99 (51% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 40 (21% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 29 (15% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 30 (15.5% of total shots)
 - Long takes between 25"-40": 40.4% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes between 41"-59": 29.3% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes 1'00" and longer: 30.3% (of total long takes)
 - Number of shots under 10": 29 (15%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 38 (38% of long takes)

Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 22 (92% of total scenes)
-Long takes that open a scene: 19 (79% of total scenes)
-Long takes that close a scene: 19 (79% of total scenes)
-Sequence shot scenes: 1 (4% of total scenes)
-Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 100% (24/24)
-Average number of long takes per scene: 4

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:
25", 25", 25", 25", 25", 26", 26", 26", 26", 27", 27", 27", 28", 28", 28", 28", 29", 29", 29", 30",
30", 30", 30", 32", 32", 33", 33", 34", 34", 35", 36", 37", 38", 38", 38", 38", 39", 40", 40", 40",
41", 41", 42", 42", 43", 44", 44", 44", 44", 44", 45", 46", 47", 47", 48", 48", 48", 49", 50", 53",
53", 54", 56", 56", 57", 57", 58", 58", 59", 1'00", 1'01", 1'01", 1'03", 1'05", 1'06", 1'08", 1'10",
1'11", 1'12", 1'12", 1'14", 1'18", 1'19", 1'22", 1'28", 1'30", 1'32", 1'38", 1'38", 1'41", 1'42",
1'42", 1'49", 2'06", 2'07", 2'09", 2'18", 2'52", 5'58

Aggregate Screen-Time of Long Takes: 93'56" (81% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 56'39" (3399"/101 shots) = ASL 34"
0'00"-57'14" (minus 35" credits) (Scenes 1-13)
ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 58'21" (3501"/92 shots) = ASL 38"
57'14"-115'35" (Scenes 14-24)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 115'00"
115'35" minus screen credit time (35")

Vive L'Amour

Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

<i>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (17)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
1.	38"	5	5	3'09"
2.	39"	6	4	3'54"
3.	48"	7	4	5'34"
4.	47"	9	5	7'07"
6.	1'03"	3	2	3'09"
7.	37"	11	7	6'42"
9.	46.5"	2	2	1'33"
13.	55"	6	4	5'31"
14.	1'32"	1	1	1'32"
16.	49"	7	5	5'45"
17.	29"	5	2	2'27"
18.	1'01"	2	2	2'02"
20.	55"	4	4	3'41"
21.	51"	8	6	6'48"
22.	25"	19	8	7'56"
23.	1'07"	4	4	4'30"
24.	1'28"	5	5	10'41"

Total Time: 82'01" (71.3% of screen-time)

<i>Scenes Dominated by Editing (1)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
8.	16"	9	2	2'26"

Total Time: 2'26" (2.1% of screen-time)

<u>Scenes with a Mixed Mode (6)</u>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
5.	28"	7	3	3'14"
10.	23"	4	2	1'31"
11.	22"	7	2	2'33"
12.	25"	25	7	10'16"
15.	21"	17	6	5'50"
19.	24"	18	7	7'09"

Total Time: 30'33" (26.6% of screen-time)

Radical Long Take Practice Extra Sampled Films

Ulysses' Gaze

Total Number of Shots: 101
Total Number of Scenes: 18
ASL: 1'38"

Long Take Breakdown:

Total Number of Long Takes: 72 (71.3%)
-Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 9 (8.9% of total shots)
-Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 10 (9.9% of total shots)
-Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 53 (52.5% of total shots)

-Long takes between 25"-40": 12.5% (of total long takes)
-Long takes between 41"-59": 13.9% (of total long takes)
-Long takes 1'00" and longer: 73.6% (of total long takes)

-Number of shots under 10": 19 (19%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 28 (39% of long takes)

Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 16 (89% of total scenes)
-Long takes that open a scene: 15 (83% of total scenes)
-Long takes that close a scene: 15 (83% of total scenes)
-Sequence shots scenes: 3 (17% of total scenes)
-Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 100% (18/18)
-Average number of long takes per scene: 4

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:
32", 33", 33", 33",34", 35", 36", 37", 38", 41", 42", 43", 47", 51", 53", 53", 54", 56", 59", 1'00",
1'01", 1'02", 1'07", 1'08", 1'12", 1'15", 1'16", 1'22", 1'25", 1'26", 1'27", 1'29", 1'30", 1'31",
1'34", 1'35", 1'38", 1'43", 1'44", 1'46", 1'49", 1'50", 1'53", 2'03", 2'08", 2'14", 2'16", 2'22",
2'23", 2'35", 2'36", 2'39", 2'51", 3'00", 3'02", 3'13", 3'14", 3'24", 3'40", 3'41", 3'43", 3'43",
3'46", 3'57", 4'34", 4'35", 4'51", 4'58", 5'37", 5'53", 7'39", 11'11"

Aggregate long take screen-time: 150'01" (91% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 82'04" (2'16"= 4788"/62 shots) = ASL 1'17"
0'00"-82'04" (Scenes 1-9) (-2'53" credits)
ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 84'21" (5061"/39 shots) = ASL 2'10"
82'04"-166'25" (Scenes 10-18)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 164'09"
166'25" minus screen credit time (2'16")

Ulysses'Gaze

Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (16)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
2.	2'51"	1	1	2'51"
3.	2'47"	4	3	11'09"

Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
4.	1'34"	8	5	12'30"
6.	1'50"	7	6	12'49"
7.	2'40"	3	3	7'59"
8.	4'51"	3	3	14'23"
9.	1'00"	15	11	14'56"
10.	1'52"	6	6	11'11"
11.	3'46"	1	1	3'46"
12.	1'17"	4	4	5'07"
13.	2'40"	4	4	10'41"
14.	1'34"	1	1	1'34"
15.	1'40"	10	10	16'45"
16.	2'58"	5	5	14'52"
17.	3'02"	6	6	18'13"
18.	1'06"	2	1	2'12"

Total Time: 160'58" (98% of screen-time)

<i>Scenes Dominated by Editing (2)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
1.	16"	4	1	1'03"
5.	7.5	17	1	2'08"

Total Time: 3'11" (1.9% of screen-time)

<i>Scenes with a Mixed Mode (0)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
<hr/>				

Mother and Son

Total Number of Shots: 59
 Total Number of Scenes: 7
 ASL: 1'08"

Long Take Breakdown:

Total Number of Long Takes: 43 (73%)
 -Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 12 (20% of total shots)
 -Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 6 (10% of total shots)
 -Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 25 (42% of total shots)

 -Long takes between 25"-40": 28% (of total long takes)
 -Long takes between 41"-59": 14% (of total long takes)
 -Long takes 1'00" and longer: 58% (of total long takes)

 -Number of shots under 10": 1 (1.7%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 11 (26% of long takes)

Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 7 (100% of total scenes)
 -Long takes that open a scene: 5 (71% of total scenes)
 -Long takes that close a scene: 6 (86% of total scenes)
 -Sequence shots scenes: 1 (14% of total scenes)

- Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 100% (7/7)
- Average number of long takes per scene: 6

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:

26", 26", 27", 30", 31" 32", 34", 35", 35", 38", 38", 40", 41", 43", 46", 47", 47", 55",
 1'01",1'02", 1'02", 1'03", 1'04", 1'08", 1'08", 1'11", 1'18", 1'21", 1'34", 1'36", 1'45", 1'55",
 2'06", 2'12", 2'12", 2'17", 2'21", 2'26", 2'34", 3'00", 3'44", 5'00", 5'10"

Aggregate screen-time: 62'21" (93% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 33'22" (2002"/26 shots) = ASL 1'17"

1'34"-34'56" (Scenes 1-4)

ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 33'24" (2004"/33 shots) = ASL 1'01"

34'56"-68'20" (Scenes 5-7)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 66'46"

68'20" minus screen credit time (1'34")

Mother and Son

Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (7)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
1.	5'00"	1	1	5'00"
2.	27"	6	3	2'40"
3.	1'40.50"	6	4	10'33"
4.	1'10"	13	10	15'09"
5.	47"	16	10	12'37"
6.	1'04"	13	11	13'57"
7.	1'42.50"	4	4	6'50"

Total Time: 66'46" (100% of screen-time)

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by the Editing (0)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	

Scene#	<u>Scenes with a Mixed Mode (0)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	

The Second Circle

Total Number of Shots: 72

Total Number of Scenes: 11

ASL: 1'15""

Long Take Breakdown:

Total Number of Long Takes: 51 (71% of total shots)

- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 9 (12.5% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 7 (9.7% of total shots)
- Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 35 (48.6.% of total shots)

- Long takes between 25"-40": 17.6% (of total long takes)
- Long takes between 41"-59": 13.7% (of total long takes)
- Long takes 1'00" and longer: 68.6% (of total long takes)

-Number of shots under 10": 6 (8.3%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 18 (35% of long takes)

Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 11 (100% of total scenes)

- Long takes that open a scene: 9 (82% of total scenes)
- Long takes that close a scene: 9 (82% of total scenes)
- Sequence shot scenes: 0 (0% of total scenes)
- Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 100% (16/18)
- Average number of long takes per scene: 4.6

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:

26", 26", 29", 30", 30", 31", 34", 36", 38", 41", 46", 48", 48", 49", 54", 57", 1'02", 1'02", 1'04", 1'08", 1'08", 1'10", 1'14", 1'17", 1'17", 1'18", 1'18", 1'22", 1'22", 1'25", 1'42", 1'46", 1'46", 1'49", 1'49", 1'56", 1'56", 1'59", 2'07", 2'09", 2'09", 2'21", 2'34", 2'52", 3'17", 3'20", 3'39", 4'14", 4'27", 5'03", 5'40"

Aggregate Screen-Time of Long Takes: 84'09" (93% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 43'53" (2633"/40 shots) = ASL 1'06"

0'00"-46'31" (minus 2'38" credits) (Scenes 1-6)

ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 46'34" (2794"/32 shots) = ASL 1'27"

46'31"-93'05" (Scenes 7-11)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 90'27"

93'05" minus screen credit time (2'38")

The Second Circle

Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (11)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
1.	1'24"	9	8	12'36"
2.	59.4	5	4	4'56"
3.	51.4"	5	4	4'17"
4.	2'17"	2	2	4'34"
5.	34.5"	4	2	2'17"
6.	1'01"	15	11	15'13"
7.	2'23"	4	4	9'43"
8.	47.9	15	8	11'59"
9.	2'29"	6	4	14'56"
10.	1'23"	3	2	4'10"
11.	1'26.5"	4	2	5'46"

Total Time: 90'27" (100% of screen-time)

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by Editing (0)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of long takes	

Scene#	<u>Scenes With a Mixed Mode (0)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of long takes	

The Hole

Total Number of Shots: 104
Total Number of Scenes: 21
ASL: 48.4"

Long Take Breakdown:

- Total Number of Long Takes: 70 (67.3% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 25 (24% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 22 (21.1% of total shots)
 - Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 23 (22.1.% of total shots)
-
- Long takes between 25"-40": 35.7% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes between 41"-59": 31.4% (of total long takes)
 - Long takes 1'00" and longer: 32.9% (of total long takes)
-
- Number of shots under 10": 9 (8.6%)

Long Take and Scene Breakdown:

- Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 16 (30% of long takes)
- Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 21 (100% of total scenes)
- Long takes that open a scene: 13 (62% of total scenes)
 - Long takes that close a scene: 18 (86% of total scenes)
 - Sequence shot scenes: 3 (14.3% of total scenes)
 - Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 100% (21/21)
 - Average number of long takes per scene: 3.3

Long Takes in Numerical Order of Length:
26", 26", 27", 29, 29", 29", 30", 30", 31", 31", 31", 31", 31", 32", 33", 34", 34", 34", 35", 36", 37", 37", 39", 40", 40", 41", 41", 41", 41", 42", 43", 43", 43", 43", 44", 46", 49", 49", 50", 52", 52", 53", 54", 55", 55", 57", 58", 1'00", 1'05", 1'12", 1'15", 1'17", 1'17", 1'19", 1'21", 1'26", 1'32", 1'32", 1'32", 1'51", 1'55", 1'57", 2'07", 2'13", 2'17", 2'28", 3'12", 3'17", 3'42", 4'30"

Aggregate Screen-Time of Long Takes: 76'21" (91% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 39'33 (2373"/52 shots) = ASL 45.6"
2'53"-42'26" (Scenes 1-13)
ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 44'29" (2669"/52 shots) = ASL 51.3"
42'26"-86'55" (Scenes 14-21)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 84'02"
89'00" minus screen credit time (4'58")

The Hole
Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (19)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
1	3'42"	1	1	3'42"
2	45.2"	5	4	3'46"
3	1'02"	3	2	3'07"
4	3'12"	1	1	3'12"
5	31"	9	5	4'39"

Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	Scene Length
6	39.4	5	3	3'17"
7	35.6	3	2	1'47"
8	34.4"	3	2	1'44"
9	43"	4	4	2'52"
11	1'05"	2	2	2'10"
12	36'25"	4	3	2'25"
13	1'21"	3	2	4'04"
14	50.3"	7	6	5'52"
15	38.75"	4	3	2'35"
16	52"	9	7	7'48"
17	27.8	9	5	4'11"
19	47.7"	9	9	7'10"
20	2'30"	5	4	12'31"
21	1'03"	2	1	2'07"

Total Time: 78'59" (94% of screen-time)

<i>Scenes Dominated by Editing (1)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of long takes	Scene Length
10	18.6"	9	2	2'48"

Total Time: 2'48" (3.3% of screen-time)

<i>Scenes With a Mixed Mode (1)</i>				
Scene#	ASL	# of Shots	# of long takes	Scene Length
18	19.3"	7	2	2'15"

Total Time: 2'15" (2.7% of screen-time)

Spring in my Hometown

Total Number of Shots: 141
Total Number of Scenes: 30
ASL: 49"

Total Number of Long Takes: 97 (69% of total shots)

- Number of long takes between 25"- 40": 25 (18% of total shots)
- Number of long takes between 41"- 59": 26 (18% of total shots)
- Number of long takes 1'00" and longer: 46 (33% of total shots)

- Long takes between 25"-40": 26% (of total long takes)
- Long takes between 41"-59": 27% (of total long takes)
- Long takes 1'00" and longer: 47% (of total long takes)

- Number of shots under 10": 05 (3.5%)

Long takes that are either the first or last shot in a scene: 38 (39% of long takes)

- Scenes that begin or end with a long take: 25 (83% of total scenes)
- Long takes that open a scene: 24 (80% of total scenes)
 - Long takes that close a scene: 13 (43% of total scenes)
 - Sequence shot scenes: 1 (3.3% of total scenes)
 - Percentage of scenes with at least one long take: 100%
 - Average number of long takes per scene: 3.2

Aggregate Screen-Time of Long Takes: 105'43" (91% of total screen-time)

ASL in 1st Half of Film: 57'59" (3479"/81 shots) = ASL 43"
0'00"-59'24" (-credits, 1.25") (Scenes 1-18)

ASL in 2nd Half of Film: 58'17" (3497"/60 shots) = ASL 58"
59'24"-117'41" (Scenes 19-30)

Total Statistical Analysis Screen-time: 116'16"
117'41" minus screen credit time (1'25")

Spring in my Hometown
Scenes Broken Down by Dominant Mode of Construction

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by the Long Take (27)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
1	1'04"	3	2	3'11"
2	57"	6	4	5'43"
3	35"	6	4	3'29"
4	46"	3	3	2'19"
5	1'13	3	3	3'38"
7	34"	7	5	3'50"
8	33"	5	4	2'48"
9	36"	3	2	1'48"
10	36"	3	2	1'57"
11	38"	2	2	1'17"
12	2'07"	1	1	2'07"
13	35"	4	2	2'23"
14	1'01"	2	1	3'03"
15	1'00"	2	2	2'00"
17	50"	11	7	9'10"
18	32"	11	4	5'53"
19	47"	4	2	3'08"
20	48"	12	11	9'42"
21	35"	4	3	2'20"
22	1'09"	5	5	5'44"
23	45"	8	6	6'06"
25	1'07"	7	5	7'53"
26	1'16"	4	4	5'05"
27	1'06"	3	3	3'20"
28	40"	5	2	3'18"
29	1'31"	3	2	4'34"
30	3'03"	2	2	6'07"

Total Time: 111'53" (96.2% of total screen-time)

Scene#	<u>Scenes Dominated by Editing (1)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
16	20"	4	1	1'23"

Total Time: 1'23" (1.2% of total screen time)

Scene#	<u>Scenes with a Mixed Mode (2)</u>			Scene Length
	ASL	# of Shots	# of Long Takes	
6	24"	5	2	2'00"
24	33"	3	1	1'00"

Total Time: 3'00" (2.6% of total screen time)

Appendix 3 Listing of Other Long Take Practitioners

This appendix consists of a sampling of other films that fit into my long take practice grouping. Whenever possible I have included an ASL taken by myself. Asterisks denote that the ASL is from a secondary source. When no ASL appears it means I was unable to make the calculation (usually because the film was seen once in a theatre), but include the film on the basis of critical-viewing intuition. When a director has more than one film that fits the category I additionally include the name. Though future research may reveal some inappropriate inclusions, I believe this stands as an accurate gauge of the respective long take practices.

Dialectical Long Take Practice (16"-26" ASL)

Films

Osaka Elegy (Kenji Mizoguchi, 1936, 23" ASL)*, *Back Street* (John Stahl, 1932, 19" ASL)*, *Le Crime de M. Lange* (Jean Renoir, 1935, 21"), *Panic in the Streets* (Elia Kazan, 1950, 25"), *Eva* (Joseph Losey, 1962, 18" ASL), *In the Company of Men* (Neil LaBute, 1997, 18" ASL), *The Spider's Stratagem* (Bernardo Bertolucci, 1969, 18" ASL), *Sopyanjie* (Im Kwon-Taek, 1993, 20" ASL), *King of the Children* (Chen Kaige, 1987, 19" ASL), *A Woman Called Sada Aba* (1970, 17" ASL), *Moloch* (Alexander Sokurov, 1999, 23" ASL).

Directors

Michelangelo Antonioni, Orson Welles, (early Jean-Luc Godard), Max Ophuls, Jean Renoir, Mikhail Kalatozov, George Cukor, Alain Resnais, Brian De Palma, Wong Kar-wai, Preston Sturges, Stanley Kubrick, Lars Von Triers, Bernardo Bertolucci, William Wyler

Synthetic Long Take Practice (25"-40" ASL)

Films

Caravan (Erik Charrell, 1934, 37" ASL)*, *Fallen Angel* (Otto Preminger, 1945, 33" ASL)*, *Sisters of Gion* (Kenji Mizoguchi, 1936, 33" ASL)*, *Magnificent Obsession* (John Stahl, 1935, 35" ASL), *Dust in the Wind* (Hou Hsiao-hsein, 1986, 34" ASL), *Yi Yi* (Edward Yang, 2000), *The Power of Kongwon Province* (Hong Sang-soo, 1997, 36" ASL), *Labyrinth of Dreams* (Sogo Ishii, 1996), *Suzaku* (Naomi Kawase, 1996), *Stranger Than Paradise* (Jim Jarmusch, 1984, 39" ASL), *L'humanité* (Bruno Dumont, 1999).

Directors

John M. Stahl, (early) Michelangelo Antonioni, Jim Jarmusch, Abbas Kiarostami, Otto Preminger, Roberto Rossellini, Kenji Mizoguchi, Jacques Rivette, Edward Yang, Jafar Panahi.

Radical Long Take Practice (40"+)

Films

The Vanquished (Michelangelo Antonioni 1953, 43" ASL*), *The Story of the Last Chrysanthemums* (Kenji Mizoguchi, 1939, 59" ASL), *Bullets Over Broadway* (Woody Allen, 1994, 50.7" ASL), *Running Time* (Josh Becker, 1997, 2'02" ASL), *Rope* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1946, 7'14" ASL), and *Under Capricorn* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1949, 41" ASL), *The Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach* (Jean-Marie Straub, 1968, 49" ASL)*, *The River* (Tsai Ming-liang, 1997, 52" ASL), *Paris* (Raymond Depardon, 1999, 51" ASL), *Virgin Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors* (Hong Sang-soo, 2000, 50" ASL), *Code Inconnu* (Michael Haneke, 1999), *Sicilia!* (Jean-Marie Straub, Danièle Huillet, 1999), *What Time is it There?* (Tsai Ming-liang, 2001, 1'12").

Directors

(late) Carl Dreyer, Theo Angelopoulos, Andrei Tarkovsky, Hou Hsiao-hsien, Tsai Ming-liang, Bela Tarr, Miklos Jançso, Alexander Sokurov, (late) Woody Allen, Manoel de Oliveira, Amos Gitai, Andrei Tarkovsky, Raymond Depardon